TO BE ISSUED
THE LIBRARY.

821.7
Sou/Poe
52603

BOMBAY BRANCH

OF THE

Royal Asiatic Society.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 23 January, 2019

SOUTHEY'S

POETICAL WORKS.

LONDON:
Printed by A. & R. Spottiswoode,
New-Street-Square.

52603
a

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

ROBERT SOUTHEY, Esq.

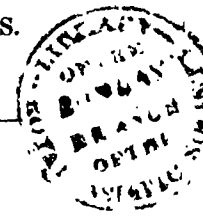
POET LAUREATE,

AND MEMBER OF THE ROYAL SPANISH ACADEMY.

VOL. XI.

MINOR POEMS.

VOL. I.



LONDON:

PRINTED FOR

LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN,

PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1805

821.7
Sou/Poe
52603

CONTENTS OF VOLUME FIRST.

PAGE

To Edith Southey,..... 1

The Triumph of Woman,..... 3

POEMS CONCERNING THE SLAVE TRADE.

Sonnet I..... 33
II..... 34
III..... 35
IV..... 36
V..... 37
VI..... 38
To the Genius of Africa,..... 39
The Sailor who had served in the Slave Trade,..... 43
Verses spoken in the Theatre at Oxford, on the Installation of Lord Grenville,..... 55

BOTANY-BAY ECLOGUES.

Elinor,..... 65
Humphrey and William,..... 70
John, Samuel, and Richard,..... 78
Frederic,..... 86

PAGE

SONNETS.

Sonnet I..... 93
II..... 94
III..... 95
IV..... 96
V..... 97
VI..... 98
VII..... 99
VIII..... 100
IX..... 101
X..... 102
XI..... 103
XII..... 104
XIII..... 105
XIV..... 106
XV..... 107
XVI..... 108
XVII..... 109
XVIII..... 110
XIX..... 111
XX..... 112

MONODRAMAS.

Sappho,..... 115
Ximalpoca,..... 119
The Wife of Fergus,..... 123
Lucretia,..... 128

PAGE

THE AMATORY POEMS OF ABEL SHUFFLEBOTTOM.

Sonnet I. Delia at Play, ... 133
II. To a Painter attempting Delia's Portrait 134
III. He proves the Existence of a Soul from his Love for Delia, ... 135
IV. The Poet expresses his Feelings respecting a Portrait in Delia's Parlour, ... 136

LOVE ELEGIES.

Elegy I. The Poet relates how he obtained Delia's Pocket Handkerchief, ... 137
II. The Poet invokes the Spirits of the Elements to approach Delia. He describes her singing, 140
III. The Poet expatiates on the Beauty of Delia's Hair, ... 143
IV. The Poet relates how he stole a Lock of Delia's Hair, and her Anger, ... 146

LYRIC POEMS.

To Contemplation, ... 151
To Horror, ... 156
To a Friend, ... 160
Remembrance, ... 164
The Soldier's Wife, ... 168
The Widow, ... 169
The Chapel Bell, ... 171
To Hymen, ... 174
Written on the First of December, 1793, ... 179
Written on the First of January, 1794, ... 182
Written on Sunday Morning, ... 186

PAGE
The Race of Banquo, ... 189
To Recovery, ... 191
Youth and Age, ... 194
The Oak of our Fathers, ... 196
The Battle of Pultowa, ... 199
The Traveller's Return, ... 202
The Old Man's Comforts, and how he gained them, ... 204
Translation of a Greek Ode on Astronomy, written by S. T. Coleridge, for the Prize at Cambridge, 1793, ... 206

The Retrospect, ... 215

MUSINGS.

The Pauper's Funeral, ... 227
On my own Miniature Picture, taken at two Years of Age, ... 229
On the Death of a favourite old Spaniel, ... 231
On a Landscape of Gaspar Poussin, ... 233
Autumn, ... 237
The Victory, ... 240
History, ... 243
The Soldier's Funeral, ... 245

TO

EDITH SOUTHEY.

With way-worn feet, a traveller woe-begone,
Life's upward road I journey'd many a day,
And framing many a sad yet soothing lay,
Beguiled the solitary hours with song.
Lonely my heart and rugged was the way,
Yet often pluck'd I, as I past along,
The wild and simple flowers of poesy;
And sometimes unreflecting as a child
Entwined the weeds which pleased a random eye.
Take thou the wreath, Beloved! it is wild
And rudely garlanded; yet scorn not thou
The humble offering, where dark rosemary weaves
Amid gay flowers its melancholy leaves,
And myrtle gathered to adorn thy brow.

1796.

The Triumph of Woman.

TO

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT.

THE lily cheek, the "purple light of love,"
The liquid lustre of the melting eye, . .
MARY! of these the Poet sung, for these
Did Woman triumph; . . . . Wilt thou with a frown
Regard the theme unworthy? . . At that age
No MAID OF ARC had snatch'd from coward man
The avenging sword of freedom; woman-kind
Recorded then no ROLAND'S martyrdom;
No CORDE'S angel and avenging arm
Had sanctified again the Murderer's name
As erst when Cæsar perish'd: and some strains
Haply may hence be drawn, befitting me
To offer, nor unworthy thy regard.

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

The Subject of the following Poem may be found in the Third and Fourth Chapters of the First Book of Esdras.

THE

TRIUMPH OF WOMAN.

GLAD as the weary traveller tempest-tost
To reach secure at length his native coast,
Who wandering long o'er distant lands has sped,
The night-blast wildly howling round his head,
Known all the woes of want, and felt the storm
Of the bleak winter parch his shivering form;
The journey o'er and every peril past
Beholds his little cottage-home at last,
And as he sees afar the smoke curl slow,
Feels his full eyes with transport overflow;
So from the scene where Death and Anguish reign,
And Vice and Folly drench with blood the plain,
Joyful I turn, to sing the Woman's praise
Avail'd again Jerusalem to raise,
Call'd forth the sanction of the Despot's nod,
And freed the nation best beloved of God.

Darius gives the feast; to Persia's court,
Awed by his will, the obedient throng resort:
Attending Satraps swell their prince's pride,
And vanquish'd Monarchs grace the Conqueror's side.
No more the Warrior wears the garb of war,
Girds on the sword, or mounts the scythed car;
No more Judæa's sons dejected go,
And hang the head, and heave the sigh of woe.
From Persia's rugged hills descend the train,
From where Orontes foams along the plain,
From where Choaspes rolls his royal waves,
And India sends her sons, submissive slaves.
Thy daughters, Babylon, for this high feast
Weave the loose robe, and paint the flowery vest,
With roseate wreaths they braid the glossy hair,
They tinge the cheek which nature form'd so fair,
Learn the soft step, the soul-subduing glance,
Melt in the song, and swim adown the dance,
Exalted on the Monarch's golden throne,
In royal state the fair Apame shone;

Her form of majesty, her eyes of fire,
Chill with respect, or kindle with desire.
The admiring multitude her charms adore,
And own her worthy of the rank she bore.

Now on his couch reclined Darius lay,
Tired with the toilsome pleasures of the day;
Without Judæa's watchful sons await,
To guard the sleeping idol of the state.
Three youths were these of Judah's royal race,
Three youths whom Nature dower'd with every grace,
To each the form of symmetry she gave,
And haughty genius curs'd each favourite slave;
These fill'd the cup, around the Monarch kept,
Served when he spake, and guarded while he slept.

Yet oft for Salem's hallow'd towers laid low
The sigh would heave, the unbidden tear would flow;
And when the dull and wearying round of power
Allow'd Zorobabel one vacant hour,

He loved on Babylon's high wall to roam,
And lingering gaze toward his distant home;
Or on Euphrates' willowy banks reclined
Hear the sad Harp moan fitful to the wind.

As now the perfumed lamps stream wide their light,
And social converse cheers the livelong night,
Thus spake Zorobabel: "Too long in vain
"For Zion desolate her sons complain;
"All hopelessly our years of sorrow flow,
"And these proud heathen mock their captives' woe.
"While Cyrus triumphed here in victor state
"A brighter prospect cheer'd our exiled fate;
"Our sacred walls again he bade us raise,
"And to Jehovah rear the pile of praise.
"Quickly these fond hopes faded from our eyes,
"As the frail sun that gilds the wintry skies,
"And spreads a moment's radiance o'er the plain,
"Soon hid by clouds which dim the scene again.

" Opprest by Artaxerxes' jealous reign,
" We vainly pleaded here, and wept in vain.
" Now when Darius, chief of mild command,
" Bids joy and pleasure fill the festive land,
" Still shall we droop the head in sullen grief,
" And sternly silent shun to seek relief?
" What if amid the Monarch's mirthful throng
" Our harps should echo to the cheerful song?"

" Fair is the occasion," thus the one replied,
" Now then let all our tuneful skill be tried.
" While the gay courtiers quaff the smiling bowl,
" And wine's strong fumes inspire the madden'd soul,
" Where all around is merriment, be mine
" To strike the lute, and praise the power of Wine."

" And while," his friend replied, " in state alone,
" Lord of the earth, Darius fills the throne,
" Be yours the mighty power of Wine to sing,
" My lute shall sound the praise of Persia's King."

To them Zorobabel: " On themes like these
" Seek ye the Monarch of Mankind to please;
" To Wine superior, or to Power's strong arms,
" Be mine to sing resistless Woman's charms.
" To him victorious in the rival lays
" Shall just Darius give the meed of praise;
" The purple robe his honour'd frame shall fold,
" The beverage sparkle in his cup of gold;
" A golden couch support his bed of rest,
" The chain of honour grace his favour'd breast;
" His the rich turban, his the car's array,
" O'er Babylon's high wall to wheel its way,
" And for his wisdom seated on the throne,
" For the KING's COUSIN shall the Bard be known."

Intent they meditate the future lay,
And watch impatient for the dawn of day.
The morn rose clear, and shrill were heard the flute,
The cornet, sackbut, dulcimer, and lute;
To Babylon's gay streets the throng resort,
Swarm through the gates, and fill the festive court.

High on his throne Darius tower'd in pride,
The fair Apame graced the Sovereign's side:
And now she smiled, and now with mimic frown
Placed on her brow the Monarch's sacred crown.
In transport o'er her faultless form he bends,
Loves every look, and every act commends.

And now Darius bids the herald call
Judæa's Bards to grace the thronging hall.
Hush'd is each sound, the attending crowd are mute,
And then the Hebrew gently touch'd the lute:

When the Traveller on his way,
Who has toil'd the livelong day;
Feels around on every side
The chilly mists of eventide,
Fatigued and faint his weary mind
Recurs to all he leaves behind;
He thinks upon the well-trimm d hearth,
The evening hour of social mirth,

And her who at departing day
Weeps for her husband far away.
Oh give to him the flowing bowl!
Bid it renovate his soul!
Then shall sorrow sink to sleep,
And he who wept no more shall weep;
For his care-clouded brow shall clear,
And his glad eye will sparkle through the tear.

When the poor man heart-oppresst
Betakes him to his evening rest,
And worn with labour thinks in sorrow
Of the labour of to-morrow;
When sadly musing on his lot
He hies him to his joyless cot,
And loathes to meet his children there,
The rivals for his scanty fare;
Oh give to him the flowing bowl!
Bid it renovate his soul!
The generous juice with magic power
Shall cheat with happiness the hour,

And with each warm affection fill
The heart by want and wretchedness made chill.

When, at the dim close of day,
The Captive loves alone to stray
Along the haunts recluse and rude
Of sorrow and of solitude;
When he sits with mournful eye
To mark the lingering radiance die,
And lets distempered Fancy roam
Amid the ruins of his home;..
Oh give to him the flowing bowl!
Bid it renovate his soul!
The bowl shall better thoughts bestow,
And lull to rest his wakeful woe,
And joy shall bless the evening hour,
And make the Captive Fortune's conqueror.

When the wearying cares of state
Oppress the Monarch with their weight,

When from his pomp retired alone
He feels the duties of the throne,
Feels that the multitude below
Depend on him for weal or woe;
When his powerful will may bless
A realm with peace and happiness,
Or with desolating breath
Breathe ruin round, and woe, and death:
Oh give to him the flowing bowl!
Bid it humanize his soul!
He shall not feel the empire's weight,
He shall not feel the cares of state,
The bowl shall each dark thought beguile,
And Nations live and prosper from his smile.

Hush'd was the lute, the Hebrew ceased the song,
Long peals of plaudits echoed from the throng;
Each tongue the liberal words of praise repaid,
On every cheek a smile applauding play'd;
The rival Bard approach'd, he struck the string,
And pour'd the loftier song to Persia's King.

Why should the wearying cares of state
Oppress the Monarch with their weight?
Alike to him if peace shall bless
The multitude with happiness;
Alike to him if frenzied War
Careers triumphant on the embattled plain,
And rolling on o'er myriads slain,
With gore and wounds shall clog his scythed car.
What though the tempest rage! no sound
Of the deep thunder shakes his distant throne,
And the red flash that spreads destruction round,
Reflects a glorious splendour on the crown.

Where is the Man who with ennobling pride,
Beholds not his own nature? where is he
Who without awe can see
The mysteries of the human mind,
The miniature of Deity?
For Man the vernal clouds descending
Shower down their fertilizing rain;
For Man the ripen'd harvest bending

Waves with soft murmur o'er the plenteous plain.
He spreads the sail on high,
The rude gale wafts him o'er the main;
For him the winds of heaven subservient blow,
Earth teems for him, for him the waters flow,
He thinks, and wills, and acts, a Deity below!

Where is the King who with elating pride
Sees not this Man, this godlike Man his slave?
Mean are the mighty by the Monarch's side;
Alike the wise, alike the brave
With timid step and pale, advance,
And tremble at the royal glance;
Suspended millions watch his breath,
Whose smile is happiness, whose frown is death.

Why goes the Peasant from that little cot,
Where PEACE and LOVE have blest his humble life?
In vain his agonizing wife
With tears bedews her husband's face,
And clasps him in a long and last embrace;

In vain his children round his bosom creep,
And weep to see their mother weep,
Fettering their father with their little arms!
What are to him the war's alarms?
What are to him the distant foes?
He at the earliest dawn of day
To daily labour went his way;
And when he saw the sun decline,
He sate in peace beneath his vine. . .
The King commands, the peasant goes,
From all he loved on earth he flies,
And for his monarch toils, and fights, and bleeds,
and dies.

What though yon City's castled wall
Cast o'er the darken'd plain its crested shade?
What though her Priests in earnest terror call
On all their host of Gods to aid?
Vain is the bulwark, vain the tower!
In vain her gallant youths expose
Their breasts, a bulwark, to the foes!
In vain at that tremendous hour,

Clasp'd in the savage soldier's reeking arms,
Shrieks to tame Heaven the violated Maid!
By the rude hand of Ruin scatter'd round,
Their moss-grown towers shall spread the desert ground.
Low shall the mouldering palace lie,
Amid the princely halls the grass wave high,
And through the shatter'd roof descend the inclement sky.

Gay o'er the embattled plain
Moves yonder warrior train,
Their banners wanton on the morning gale!
Full on their bucklers beams the rising ray,
Their glittering helms give glory to the day;
The shout of war rings echoing o'er the vale:
Far reaches as the aching eye can strain
The splendid horror of their wide array.
Ah! not in vain expectant, o'er
Their glorious pomp the vultures soar!
Amid the Conqueror's palace high
Shall sound the song of victory;
Long after journeying o'er the plan

The traveller shall with startled eye
See their white bones then blanched by many a
winter sky.

Lord of the earth! we will not raise
The temple to thy bounded praise.
For thee no victim need expire;
For thee no altar blaze with hallowed fire.
The burning City flames for thee,
Thine Altar is the field of victory!
Thy sacred Majesty to bless
Man a self-offer'd victim freely flies;
To thee he sacrifices Happiness
And Peace, and Love's endearing ties;
To thee a Slave he lives, for thee a Slave he dies.

Hush'd was the lute, the Hebrew ceased to sing;
The shout rush'd forth, For ever live the King!
Loud was the uproar, as when Rome's decree
Pronounced Achaia once again was free;
Assembled Greece enrapt with fond belief
Heard the false boon, and bless'd the treacherous
Chief.

Each breast with freedom's holy ardour glows,
From every voice the cry of rapture rose;
Their thundering clamours rend the astonished sky,
And birds o'erpassing hear, and drop, and die.
Thus o'er the Persian dome their plaudits ring,
And the high hall re-echoed..Live the King!
The Mutes bow'd reverent down before their Lord,
The assembled Satraps envied and adored,
Joy sparkled in the Monarch's conscious eyes,
And his pleased pride already doom'd the prize.

Silent they saw Zorobabel advance:
Quick on Apame shot his timid glance;
With downward eye he paused a moment mute,
Then with light finger touch'd the softer lute.
Apame knew the Hebrew's grateful cause,
And bent her head, and sweetly smiled applause.

Why is the warrior's cheek so red?
Why downward droops his musing head?
Why that slow step, that faint advance,
That keen yet quick retreating glance?

That crested head in war tower'd high,
No backward glance disgraced that eye,
No flushing fear that cheek o'erspread,
When stern he strode o'er heaps of dead:
Strange tumult now his bosom moves, . .
The Warrior fears because he loves.

Why does the Youth delight to rove
Amid the dark and lonely grove?
Why in the throng where all are gay,
With absent eyes from gaiety distraught,
Sits he alone in silent thought?
Silent he sits, for far away
His passion'd soul delights to stray;
Recluse he roves as if he fain would shun
All human-kind, because he loves but One!

Yes, King of Persia, thou art blest!
But not because the sparkling bowl
To rapture elevates thy waken'd soul;
But not because of Power possest;

Nor that the Nations dread thy nod,
And Princes reverence thee their earthly God!
Even on a Monarch's solitude
Will Care, dark visitant, intrude;
The bowl brief pleasure can bestow,
The purple cannot shield from woe!
But, King of Persia, thou art blest,
For Heaven who raised thee thus the world above,
Hath made thee happy in Apame's love!

Oh! I have seen him fondly trace
The heavenly features of her face,
Rove o'er her form with eager eye,
And sigh and gaze, and gaze and sigh.
Lo! from his brow with mimic frown
Apame takes the sacred crown;
Those sparkling eyes, that radiant face,
Give to the diadem new grace:
And subject to a Woman's laws,
Darius sees, and smiles applause!

He ceased, and silent still remain'd the throng,
While rapt attention own'd the power of song.
Then, loud as when the wintry whirlwinds blow,
From every voice the thundering plaudits flow;
Darius smiled, Apame's sparkling eyes
Glanced on the King, and Woman won the prize.

Now silent sate the expectant crowd: Alone
The victor Hebrew gazed not on the throne;
With deeper hue his cheek distemper'd glows,
With statelier stature loftier now he rose;
Heavenward he gazed, regardless of the throng,
And pour'd with awful voice sublimer song.

Ancient of days! Eternal Truth! one hymn,
One holier strain the Bard shall raise to thee,
Thee Powerful! Thee Benevolent! Thee Just!
Friend! Father! All in All!... The Vine's rich blood,
The Monarch's might, and Woman's conquering charms,

These shall we praise alone?.. O ye who sit
Beneath your vine, and quaff at evening hour
The healthful bowl, remember Him whose dews,
Whose rains, whose sun, matured the growing fruit,
Creator and Preserver!.. Reverence Him,
O thou who from thy throne dispensest life
And death, for He hath delegated power,
And thou shalt one day at the throne of God
Render thy strict account!... O ye who gaze
Enrapt on Beauty's fascinating form,
Gaze on with love, and loving beauty, learn
To shun abhorrent all the mental eye
Beholds deform'd and foul; for so shall Love
Climb to the source of goodness. God of truth!
All-Just! All-Mighty! I should ill deserve
Thy noblest gift, the gift divine of song,
If, so content with ear-deep melodies,
To please all-profitless, I did not pour
Severer strains; of Truth..eternal Truth,
Unchanging Justice, universal Love.
Such strains awake the Soul to loftiest thoughts;

Such strains the blessed Spirits of the Good
Waft, grateful incense! to the Halls of Heaven.

The dying notes still murmur'd on the string,
When from his throne arose the raptured King.
About to speak he stood, and waved his hand,
And all expectant sate the obedient band.

Then just and generous, thus the Monarch cries,
" Be thine, Zorobabel, the well-earn'd prize.
" The purple robe of state thy form shall fold,
" The beverage sparkle in thy cup of gold;
" The golden couch, the car, and honour'd chain,
" Requite the merits of thy favour'd strain,
" And raised supreme the ennobled race among
" Be call'd MY COUSIN for the victor song.
" Nor these alone the victor song shall bless,
" Ask what thou wilt, and what thou wilt possess."

" Fallen is Jerusalem!" the Hebrew cries,
And patriot anguish fills his streaming eyes,

" Hurl'd to the earth by Rapine's vengeful rod,
" Polluted lies the temple of our God;
" Far in a foreign land her sons remain,
" Hear the keen taunt, and drag the captive chain;
" In fruitless woe they wear the wearying years,
" And steep the bread of bitterness in tears.
" O monarch, greatest, mildest, best of men,
" Restore us to those ruined walls again!
" Allow us to rebuild that sacred dome,
" To live in liberty, and die at Home."

So spake Zorobabel. — Thus Woman's praise
Availed again Jerusalem to raise,
Call'd forth the sanction of the Despot's nod,
And freed the Nation best beloved of God.

1793.

Poems

concerning

The Slave Trade.

I am Innocent of this Blood, SEE YE TO IT!

SONNET I.

HOLD your mad hands! for ever on your plain
Must the gorged vulture clog his beak with blood?
For ever must your Niger's tainted flood
Roll to the ravenous shark his banquet slain?
Hold your mad hands! what demon prompts to rear
The arm of Slaughter? on your savage shore
Can Hell-sprung Glory claim the feast of gore,
With laurels water'd by the widow's tear
Wreathing his helmet crown? .. Lift high the spear!
And like the desolating whirlwind's sweep,
Plunge ye yon bark of anguish in the deep;
For the pale fiend cold-hearted Commerce there
Hath spread his toils accursed wide and far,
And calls, to share the prey, his kindred Demon War.

SONNET II.

WHY dost thou beat thy breast and rend thine hair,
And to the deaf sea pour thy frantic cries?
Before the gale the laden vessel flies;
The Heavens all-favouring smile, the breeze is fair;
Hark to the clamours of the exulting crew!
Hark how their thunders mock the patient skies!
Why dost thou shriek, and strain thy red-swoln eyes,
As the white sail is lessening from thy view?
Go pine in want and anguish and despair,
There is no mercy found in human-kind!
Go, Widow, to thy grave, and rest thee there!
But may the God of justice bid the wind
Whelm that curst bark beneath the mountain wave,
And bless with Liberty and Death the Slave!

SONNET III.

Oh, he is worn with toil! the big drops run
Down his dark cheek; hold—hold thy merciless hand,
Pale tyrant! for beneath thy hard command
O'erwearied nature sinks. The scorching Sun,
As pitiless as proud Prosperity,
Darts on him his full beams: gasping he lies
Arraigning with his looks the patient skies,
While that inhuman trader lifts on high
The mangling scourge. O ye who at your ease
Sip the blood-sweeten'd beverage! thoughts like these
Haply ye scorn: I thank thee, Gracious God,
That I do feel upon my cheek the glow
Of indignation, when beneath the rod
A sable brother writhes in silent woe.

SONNET IV.

'Tis night; the mercenary tyrants sleep
As undisturb'd as Justice! but no more
The wretched Slave, as on his native shore,
Rests on his reedy couch: he wakes to weep!
Though through the toil and anguish of the day
No tear escaped him, not one suffering groan
Beneath the twisted thong, he weeps alone
In bitterness; thinking that far away
Though the gay Negroes join the midnight song,
Though merriment resounds on Niger's shore,
She whom he loves far from the cheerful throng
Stands sad, and gazes from her lowly door
With dim-grown eye, silent and woe-begone,
And weeps for him who will return no more.

SONNET V.

Did then the Negro rear at last the Sword
Of Vengeance? drench'd he deep its thirsty blade
In the hard heart of his tyrannic lord?
Oh! who shall blame him? through the midnight shade
Still o'er his tortured memory rush'd the thought
Of every past delight; his native grove,
Friendship's best joys, and Liberty and Love,
All lost for ever! Then Remembrance wrought
His soul to madness: round his restless bed
Freedom's pale spectre stalk'd, with a stern smile
Pointing the wounds of Slavery, the while
She shook her chains and hung her sullen head:
No more on Heaven he calls with fruitless breath,
But sweetens with revenge the draught of death.

SONNET VI.

HIGH in the air exposed the Slave is hung,
To all the birds of Heaven, their living food!
He groans not, though awaked by that fierce Sun
New tortures live to drink their parent blood!
He groans not, though the gorging Vulture tear
The quivering fibre! Hither gaze, O ye
Who tore this Man from Peace and Liberty!
Gaze hither, ye who weigh with scrupulous care
The right and prudent; for beyond the grave
There is another world!..And call to mind,
Ere your decrees proclaim to all mankind
Murder is legalized, that there the Slave,
Before the Eternal, "thunder-tongued shall plead
"Against the deep damnation of your deed."

1794.

TO THE GENIUS OF AFRICA.

O THOU, who from the mountain's height
Roll'st down thy clouds with all their weight
Of waters to old Nile's majestic tide;
Or o'er the dark sepulchral plain
Recallest Carthage in her ancient pride,
The Mistress of the Main;
Hear, Genius, hear thy children's cry!
Not always shouldst thou love to brood
Stern o'er the desert solitude
Where seas of Sand toss their hot surges high;
Nor, Genius, should the midnight song
Detain thee in some milder mood
The palmy plains among,
Where Gambia to the torch's light
Flows radiant through the awaken'd night.

Ah, linger not to hear the song!
Genius, avenge thy children's wrong!
The Demon Avarice on your shore
Pours all the horrors of his train,
And hark! where from the field of gore
Howls the hyena o'er the slain!
Lo! where the flaming village fires the skies!
Avenging Power, awake! arise!

Arise, thy children's wrongs redress!
Ah, heed the mother's wretchedness!
When in the hot infectious air
O'er her sick babe she bows opprest,..
Ah, hear her when the Traders tear
The drooping infant from her breast!
Whelm'd in the waters he shall rest!
Hear thou the wretched mother's cries,
Avenging Power! awake! arise!

By the rank infected air
That taints those dungeons of despair,

By the scourges blacken'd o'er
And stiff and hard with human gore,
By every groan of deep distress,
By every curse of wretchedness,
By all the train of Crimes that flow
From the hopelessness of Woe,
By every drop of blood bespilt,
By Afric's wrongs and Europe's guilt,
Awake! arise! avenge!

And thou hast heard! and o'er their blood-fed plains
Swept thine avenging hurricanes;
And bade thy storms with whirlwind roar
Dash their proud navies on the shore;
And where their armies claim'd the fight
Wither'd the warrior's might;
And o'er the unholy host with baneful breath,
There, Genius, thou hast breathed the gales of Death.

1795.

THE SAILOR,

WHO HAD SERVED IN THE SLAVE TRADE.

In September, 1798, a Dissenting Minister of Bristol discovered a Sailor in the neighbourhood of that City, groaning and praying in a cow-house. The circumstance which occasioned his agony of mind is detailed in the annexed Ballad, without the slightest addition or alteration. By presenting it as a Poem the story is made more public, and such stories ought to be made as public as possible.

THE SAILOR,

WHO HAD SERVED IN THE SLAVE TRADE.

It was a Christian minister,
Who, in the month of flowers,
Walk'd forth at eve amid the fields
Near Bristol's ancient towers.

When from a lonely out-house breathed,
He heard a voice of woe,
And groans which less might seem from pain,
Than wretchedness to flow;

Heart-rending groans they were, with words
Of bitterest despair,
Yet with the holy name of Christ
Pronounced in broken prayer.

The Christian minister went in,
A sailor there he sees,
Whose hands were lifted up to Heaven,
And he was on his knees.

Nor did the Sailor so intent
His entering footsteps heed,
But now 'Our Father' said, and now
His half-forgotten creed;

And often on his Saviour call'd
With many a bitter groan,
But in such anguish as may spring
From deepest guilt alone.

The miserable man was ask'd
Why he was kneeling there,
And what had been the crime that caused
The anguish of his prayer.

I have done a cursed thing! he cried,
It haunts me night and day,
And I have sought this lonely place
Here undisturb'd to pray,

Aboard I have no place for prayer,
So I came here alone,
That I might freely kneel and pray,
And call on Christ, and groan.

If to the main-mast head I go,
The Wicked One is there;
From place to place, from rope to rope,
He follows every where.

I shut my eyes . . it matters not . .
Still, still the same I see, . .
And when I lie me down at night,
'Tis always day with me!

He follows, follows every where,
And every place is Hell!
O God .·. and I must go with him
In endless fire to dwell!

He follows, follows every where,
He's still above .. below!
Oh, tell me where to fly from him!
Oh, tell me where to go!

But tell thou, quoth the Stranger then,
What this thy crime hath been,
So haply I may comfort give
To one who grieves for sin.

O cursed, cursed is the deed!
The wretched man replies,
And night and day and every where
'Tis still before my eyes.

I sail'd on board a Guinea-man,
And to the slave-coast went;...
Would that the sea had swallow'd me
When I was innocent!

And we took in our cargo there,
Three hundred negro slaves,
And we sail'd homeward merrily
Over the ocean-waves.

But some were sulky of the slaves,
And would not touch their meat,
So therefore we were forced by threats
And blows to make them eat.

One woman sulkier than the rest,
Would still refuse her food,...
O Jesus God! I hear her cries!
I see her in her blood!

The captain made me tie her up,
And flog while he stood by,
And then he cursed me if I staid
My hand to hear her cry.

She groan'd, she shriek'd,..I could not spare,
For the Captain he stood by...
Dear God! that I might rest one night
From that poor creature's cry!

What woman's child a sight like that
Could bear to look upon!
And still the Captain would not spare..
But bade me still flog on.

She could not be more glad than I
When she was taken down:
A blessed minute!..'twas the last
That I have ever known!

I did not close my eyes all night
Thinking what I had done;
I heard her groans and they grew faint
Towards the rising sun.

She groan'd and moan'd, but her voice grew
Fainter at morning tide,
Fainter and fainter still it came
Until at noon she died.

They flung her overboard;..poor wretch
She rested from her pain,..
But when..O Christ! O blessed God!
Shall I have rest again!

I saw the sea close over her,
Yet she is still in sight;
I see her twisting every where;
I see her day and night.

Go where I will, do what I can,
The Wicked One I see:
Dear Christ, have mercy on my soul!
O God, deliver me!

Oh give me comfort, if you can!
Oh tell me where to fly!
Oh tell me if there can be hope
For one so lost as I!

What said the Minister of Christ?
He bade him trust in Heaven,
And call on Him for whose dear sake
All sins shall be forgiven.

He told him of that precious blood
Which should all sins efface;
Told him that none are lost, but they
Who turn from proffer'd grace.

He bade him pray, and knelt with him,
And join'd him in his prayers:
And some who read the dreadful tale
Perhaps will aid with theirs.

1798.

VERSES

SPOKEN IN THE THEATRE AT OXFORD,

ON THE

Installation of Lord Grenville.

VERSES

SPOKEN IN THE THEATRE AT OXFORD,

UPON THE

INSTALLATION OF LORD GRENVILLE.

GRENVILLE, few years have had their course, since last
Exulting Oxford view'd a spectacle
Like this day's pomp; and yet to those who throng'd
These walls, which echoed then with Portland's praise,
What change hath intervened! The bloom of spring
Is fled from many a cheek, where roseate joy
And beauty bloom'd; the inexorable grave
Hath claim'd its portion; and the band of youths,
Who then, collected here as in the port
From whence to launch on life's adventurous sea,
Stood on the beach, ere this have found their lots
Of good or evil. Thus the lapse of years,

Evolving all things in its quiet course,
Hath wrought for them; and though those years have seen
Fearful vicissitudes, of wilder change
Than history yet had learnt, or old romance
In wildest mood imagined, yet these, too,
Portentous as they seem, not less have risen,
Each of its natural cause the sure effect,
All righteously ordain'd. Lo! kingdoms wreck'd,
Thrones overturn'd, built up, then swept away
Like fabrics in the summer clouds, dispersed
By the same breath that heap'd them; rightful kings,
Who, from a line of long-drawn ancestry
Held the transmitted sceptre, to the axe
Bowing the anointed head; or dragg'd away
To eat the bread of bondage; or escaped
Beneath the shadow of Britannia's shield,
There only safe. Such fate have vicious courts,
Statesmen corrupt, and fear-struck policy,
Upon themselves drawn down; till Europe, bound
In iron chains, lies bleeding in the dust,

Beneath the feet of upstart tyranny:
Only the heroic Spaniard, he alone
Yet unsubdued in these degenerate days,
With desperate virtue, such as in old time
Hallow'd Saguntum and Numantia's name,
Stands up against the oppressor undismay'd:
So may the Almighty bless the noble race,
And crown with happy end their holiest cause!

Deem not these dread events the monstrous birth
Of chance! And thou, O England, who dost ride
Serene amid the waters of the flood,
Preserving, even like the Ark of old,
Amid the general wreck, thy purer faith,
Domestic loves, and ancient liberty,
Look to thyself, O England! for be sure,
Even to the measure of thine own desert,
The cup of retribution to thy lips
Shall soon or late be dealt!..a thought that well
Might fill the stoutest heart of all thy sons.
With aweful apprehension! Therefore, they

Who fear the Eternal's justice, bless thy name,
Grenville, because the wrongs of Africa
Cry out no more to draw a curse from heaven
On England; — for if still the trooping sharks
Track by the scent of death the accursed ship
Freighted with human anguish, in her wake
Pursue the chace, crowd round her keel, and dart
Toward the sound contending, when they hear
The frequent carcase from her guilty deck
Dash in the opening deep, no longer now
The guilt shall rest on England; but if yet
There be among her children, hard of heart
And sear'd of conscience, men who set at nought
Her laws and God's own word, upon themselves
Their sin be visited!.. the Red-cross flag,
Redeem'd from stain so foul, no longer now
Covereth the abomination.

This thy praise,
O Grenville, and while ages roll away
This shall be thy remembrance! Yea, when all
For which the tyrant of these abject times

Hath given his honourable name on earth,
His nights of innocent sleep, his hopes of heaven:
When all his triumphs and his deeds of blood,
The fretful changes of his feverish pride;
His midnight murders and perfidious plots,
Are but a tale of years so long gone by,
That they who read distrust the hideous truth,
Willing to let a charitable doubt
Abate their horror; Grenville, even then
Thy memory will be fresh among mankind!
Afric with all her tongues will speak of thee,
With Wilberforce and Clarkson, he whom Heaven,
To be the apostle of this holy work
Raised up and strengthen'd, and upheld through all
His arduous toil. To end the glorious task,
That blessed, that redeeming deed was thine:
Be it thy pride in life, thy thought in death,
Thy praise beyond the tomb. The statesman's fame
Will fade, the conqueror's laurel crown grow sere;
Fame's loudest trump upon the ear of Time
Leaves but a dying echo. They alone

Are held in everlasting memory,
Whose deeds partake of heaven, Long ages hence
Nations unborn, in cities that shall rise
Along the palmy coast, will bless thy name;
And Senegal and secret Niger's shore,
And Calabar, no longer startled then
With sounds of murder, will, like Isis now,
Ring with the songs that tell of Grenville's praise.

1810.

Botany-Bay Eclogues.

Where a sight shall shuddering Sorrow find,
Sad as the ruins of the human mind.

BOWLES.

BOTANY-BAY ECLOGUES.

ELINOR.

Time, *Morning.* Scene, *the Shore.*

ONCE more to daily toil, once more to wear
The livery of shame, once more to search
With miserable task this savage shore!
O thou, who mountest so triumphantly
In yonder Heaven, beginning thy career
Of glory, O thou blessed Sun! thy beams
Fall on me with the same benignant light
Here, at the furthest limits of the world,
And blasted as I am with infamy,
As when in better years poor ELINOR
Gazed on thy glad uprise with eye undimm'd
By guilt and sorrow, and the opening morn
Woke her from quiet sleep to days of peace!

In other occupation then I trod
The beach at eve; and then when I beheld
The billows as they roll'd before the storm
Burst on the rock and rage, my timid soul
Shrunk at the perils of the boundless deep,
And heaved a sigh for suffering mariners.
Ah! little thinking I myself was doom'd
To tempt the perils of the boundless deep,
An Outcast, unbeloved and unbewail'd.

Still wilt thou haunt me, Memory! still present
The fields of England to my exiled eyes,
The joys which once were mine? Even now I see
The lowly lovely dwelling! even now
Behold the woodbine clasping its white walls,
Where fearlessly the red-breasts chirp around
To ask their morning meal: and where at eve
I loved to sit and watch the rook sail by,
And hear his hollow tones, what time he sought
The church-yard elm, that with its ancient boughs
Full-foliaged half conceal'd the house of God;

That holy house, where I so oft have heard
My father's voice explain the wond'rous works
Of heaven to sinful man. Ah! little deem'd
His virtuous bosom, that his shameless child
So soon should spurn the lesson! sink, the slave
Of Vice and Infamy! the hireling prey
Of brutal appetite! at length worn out
With famine, and the avenging scourge of guilt,
Should share dishonesty!—Yet dread to die!

Welcome, ye savage lands, ye barbarous climes,
Where angry England sends her outcast sons,
I hail your joyless shores! My weary bark,
Long tempest-tost on Life's inclement sea,
Here hails her haven! welcomes the drear scene,
The marshy plain, the briar-entangled wood,
And all the perils of a world unknown.
For Elinor has nothing new to fear
From fickle Fortune! All her rankling shafts
Barb'd with disgrace, and venom'd with disease,

Have pierced my bosom, and the dart of death
Has lost its terrors to a wretch like me.

Welcome, ye marshy heaths! ye pathless woods,
Where the rude native rests his wearied frame
Beneath the sheltering shade; where, when the storm,
As rough and bleak it rolls along the sky,
Benumbs his naked limbs, he flies to seek
The dripping shelter. Welcome, ye wild plains
Unbroken by the plough, undelved by hand
Of patient rustic; where for lowing herds,
And for the music of the bleating flocks,
Alone is heard the kangaroo's sad note
Deepening in distance. Welcome, ye rude climes,
The realm of Nature; for, as yet unknown
The crimes and comforts of luxurious life,
Nature benignly gives to all enough,
Denies to all a superfluity.
What though the garb of infamy I wear,
Though day by day along the echoing beach

I cull the wave-worn shells; yet day by day,
I earn in honesty my frugal food,
And lay me down at night to calm repose,
No more condemned the mercenary tool
Of brutal lust, while heaves the indignant heart
With Virtue's stifled sigh, to fold my arms
Round the rank felon, and for daily bread
To hug contagion to my poison'd breast;
On these wild shores the saving hand of Grace
Shall probe my secret soul; shall cleanse its wounds
And fit the faithful penitent for Heaven.

1794.

HUMPHREY AND WILLIAM.

Time, *Noon.*

HUMPHREY.

SEE'ST thou not, William, that the scorching Sun
By this time half his daily race has run?
The savage thrusts his light canoe to shore,
And hurries homeward with his fishy store.
Suppose we leave awhile this stubborn soil,
To eat our dinner and to rest from toil!

WILLIAM.

Agreed. Yon tree, whose purple gum bestows
A ready medicine for the sick man's woes,
Forms with its shadowy boughs a cool retreat
To shield us from the noontide's sultry heat.
Ah, Humphrey! now upon old England's shore
The weary labourer's morning work is o'er:
The woodman there rests from his measured stroke,
Flings down his axe, and sits beneath the oak;

Savour'd with hunger there he eats his food,
There drinks the cooling streamlet of the wood.
To us no cooling streamlet winds its way,
No joys domestic crown for us the day;
The felon's name, the outcast's garb we wear,
Toil all the day, and all the night despair.

HUMPHREY.

Aye, William! labouring up the furrow'd ground,
I used to love the village clock's dull sound,
Rejoice to hear my morning toil was done,
And trudge it homewards when the clock went one.
Twas ere I turn'd a soldier and a sinner!
Pshaw! curse this whining—let us fall to dinner.

WILLIAM.

I too have loved this hour, nor yet forgot
Each joy domestic of my little cot.
For at this hour my wife with watchful care
Was wont her humble dainties to prepare;
The keenest sauce by hunger was supplied,
And my poor children prattled at my side.

Methinks I see the old oak table spread,
The clean white trencher and the good brown bread,
The cheese my daily food which Mary made,
For Mary knew full well the housewife's trade:
The jug of cyder,—cyder I could make—
And then the knives,—I won 'em at the wake.
Another has them now! I toiling here
Look backward like a child, and drop a tear.

HUMPHREY.

I love a dismal story: tell me thine,
Meantime good Will I'll listen as I dine,
I too, my friend, can tell a piteous story
When I turn'd hero how I purchased glory.

WILLIAM.

But, Humphrey, sure thou never canst have known
The comforts of a little home thine own:
A home so snug, so cheerful too, as mine,
'Twas always clean, and we could make it fine;
For there King Charles's Golden Rules were seen,
And there—God bless 'em both—the King and Queen.

The pewter plates, our garnish'd chimney's grace,
So bright that in them you might see your face;
And over all, to frighten thieves, was hung,
Well clean'd, although but seldom used, my gun,
Ah! that damn'd gun! I took it down one morn,
A desperate deal of harm they did my corn!
Our testy Squire too lov'd to save the breed,
So covey upon covey ate my seed.
I marked the mischievous rogues, and took my aim;
I fired, they fell, and ... up the keeper came.
That cursed morning brought on my undoing;
I went to prison, and my farm to ruin.
Poor Mary! for her grave the parish paid,
No tomb-stone tells where her poor corpse is laid!
My Children .. my poor boys ..

HUMPHREY.

Come! .. Grief is dry. ..
You to your dinner; .. to my story I.
To you my friend who happier days have known,
And each calm comfort of a home your own,

This is bad living: I have spent my life
In hardest toil and unavailing strife,
And here (from forest ambush safe at least)
To me this scanty pittance seems a feast.
I was a plough-boy once; as free from woes
And blithesome as the lark with whom I rose.
Each evening at return a meal I found;
And, though my bed was hard, my sleep was sound.
One Whitsuntide, to go to Fair, I drest
Like a great bumpkin in my Sunday's best;
A primrose posey in my hat I stuck,
And to the revel went to try my luck.
From show to show, from booth to booth I stray,
See, stare, and wonder all the live-long day.
A Sergeant to the fair recruiting came,
Skilled in man-catching, to beat up for game;
Our booth he enter'd and sat down by me;..
Methinks even now the very scene I see!
The canvass roof, the hogshead's running store,
The old blind fidler seated next the door,
The frothy tankard passing to and fro,
And the rude rabble round the puppet-show.

The Sergeant eyed me well; the punch-bowl comes,
And as we laugh'd and drank, up struck the drums.
And now he gives a bumper to his wench,
God save the King, and then, God damn the French!
Then tells the story of his last campaign,
How many wounded and how many slain,
Flags flying, cannons roaring, drums a-beating,
The English marching on, the French retreating...
" Push on.. push on, my lads! they fly before ye,
" March on to riches, happiness, and glory!"
At first I wonder'd, by degrees grew bolder,
Then cried, " 'Tis a fine thing to be a soldier!"
" 'Aye, Humphrey!" says the Sergeant, .. " that's
" your name?
" 'Tis a fine thing to fight the French for fame!
" March to the field, .. knock out a Mounseer's
" brains,
" And pick the scoundrel's pocket for your pains.
" Come, Humphrey, come! thou art a lad of spirit;
" Rise to a halbert, as I did, .. by merit!
" Wouldst thou believe it? even I was once
" As thou art now a plough-boy and a dunce;

" But courage raised me to my rank. How now, boy!
" Shall Hero Humphrey still be Numps the plough-
boy?
" A proper-shaped young fellow! tall and straight!
" Why, thou wert made for glory!.. five feet eight!
" The road to riches is the field of fight!
" Didst ever see a guinea look so bright?
" Why, regimentals, Numps, would give thee grace,
" A hat and feather would become that face;
" The girls would crowd around thee to be kist!..
" Dost love a girl?"—"Od Zounds!" I cried, "I'll list!"
So pass'd the night: anon the morning came,
And off I set a volunteer for fame.
" Back shoulders, turn out your toes, hold up your
head,
" Stand easy!" so I did... till almost dead.
O how I long'd to tend the plough again,
Trudge up the field, and whistle o'er the plain,
When tired and sore amid the piteous throng
Hungry and cold and wet I limp'd along,
And growing fainter as I pass'd and colder,
Cursed that ill hour when I became a soldier!

In town I found the hours more gaily pass,
And time fled swiftly with my girl and glass;
The girls were wond'rous kind and wond'rous fair,
They soon transferr'd me to the Doctor's care;
The Doctor undertook to cure the evil,
And he almost transferr'd me to the Devil.
'Twere tedious to relate the dismal story
Of fighting, fasting, wretchedness, and glory.
At last discharged, to England's shores I came,
Paid for my wounds with want instead of fame;
Found my fair friends, and plunder'd as they bade me;
They kist me, coax'd me, robb'd me, and betray'd me.
'Tried and condemn'd His Majesty transports me,
And here in peace, I thank him, he supports me.
So ends my dismal and heroic story,
And Humphrey gets more good from guilt than glory.

1794.

JOHN, SAMUEL, AND RICHARD.

Time, *Evening.*

JOHN.

'Tis a calm pleasant evening, the light fades away,
And the sun going down has done watch for the day.
To my mind we live wonderous well when transported;
It is but to work, and we must be supported.
Fill the cann, Dick! Success here to Botany-Bay!

RICHARD.

Success if you will,.. but God send me away!

JOHN.

You lubberly landsmen don't know when you're well!
Hadst thou known half the hardships of which I can tell!
The sailor has no place of safety in store;
From the tempest at sea, to the press-gang on shore!

When Roguery rules all the rest of the earth,
God be thank'd, in this corner I've got a good birth.

SAMUEL.

Talk of hardships! what these are the sailor don't know;
'Tis the soldier, my friend, that's acquainted with woe;
Long journies, short halting, hard work and small pay,
To be popt at like pigeons for sixpence a day!..
Thank God I'm safe quarter'd at Botany-Bay.

JOHN.

Ah! you know but little: I'll wager a pot
I have suffer'd more evils than fell to your lot.
Come, we'll have it all fairly and properly tried,
Tell story for story, and Dick shall decide.

SAMUEL.

Done.

JOHN.

Done. 'Tis a wager, and I shall be winner;
Thou wilt go without grog, Sam, to-morrow at dinner.

SAMUEL.

I was trapp'd by the Sergeant's palav'ring pretences,
He listed me when I was out of my senses.
So I took leave to-day of all care and all sorrow,
And was drill'd to repentance and reason to-morrow.

JOHN.

I would be a sailor and plough the wide ocean,
But was soon sick and sad with the billows' commotion,
So the Captain he sent me aloft on the mast,
And cursed me, and bade me cry there, .. and hold fast!

SAMUEL.

After marching all day, faint and hungry and sore,
I have lain down at night on the swamps of the moor,
Unshelter'd and forced by fatigue to remain,
All chill'd by the wind and benumb'd by the rain.

JOHN.

I have rode out the storm when the billows beat high,
And the red gleaming lightnings flash'd through the
dark sky;

When the tempest of night the black sea overcast,
Wet and weary I labour'd, yet sung to the blast.

SAMUEL.

I have march'd, trumpets sounding, drums beating, flags flying,
Where the music of war drown'd the shrieks of the dying,
When the shots whizz'd around me all dangers defied,
Push'd on when my comrades fell dead at my side;
Drove the foe from the mouth of the cannon away,
Fought, conquer'd, and bled, all for sixpence a day.

JOHN.

And I too, friend Samuel! have heard the shots rattle!
But we seamen rejoice in the play of the battle;
Though the chain and the grape-shot roll splintering round,
With the blood of our messmates though slippery the ground,

The fiercer the fight, still the fiercer we grow,
We heed not our loss so we conquer the foe;
And the hard battle won, if the prize be not sunk,
The Captain gets rich, and the Sailors get drunk.

SAMUEL.

God help the poor soldier when backward he goes
In disgraceful retreat through a country of foes!
No respite from danger by day or by night,
He is still forced to fly, still o'ertaken to fight;
Every step that he takes he must battle his way,
He must force his hard meal from the peasant away;
No rest, and no hope, from all succour afar,
God forgive the poor soldier for going to the war!

JOHN.

But what are these dangers to those I have past
When the dark billows roar'd to the roar of the blast;
When we work'd at the pumps worn with labour and weak,
And with dread still beheld the increase of the leak?

Sometimes as we rose on the wave could our sight
From the rocks of the shore catch the light-house's
light;
In vain to the beach to assist us they press,
We fire faster and faster our guns of distress;
Still with rage unabating the wind and waves roar;
How the giddy wreck reels, as the billows burst o'er!
Leap, leap; for she yawns, for she sinks in the wave!
Call on God to preserve .. for God only can save!

SAMUEL.

There's an end of all troubles, however, at last!
And when I in the waggon of wounded was cast,
When my wounds with the chilly night-wind smart-
ed sore,
And I thought of the friends I should never see more,
No hand to relieve, scarce a morsel of bread,
Sick at heart I have envied the peace of the dead!
Left to rot in a jail till by treaty set free,
Old England's white cliffs with what joy did I see!

I had gain'd enough glory, some wounds, but no good,
And was turn'd on the public to shift how I could,
When I think what I've suffer'd, and where I am now,
I curse him who snared me away from the plough.

JOHN.

When I was discharged I went home to my wife,
There in comfort to spend all the rest of my life.
My wife was industrious, we earn'd what we spent,
And though little we had, were with little content;
And whenever I listen'd and heard the wind roar,
I bless'd God for my little snug cabin on shore.
At midnight they seized me, they dragg'd me away,
They wounded me sore when I would not obey,
And because for my country I'd ventured my life,
I was dragg'd like a thief from my home and my wife.
Then the fair wind of fortune chopt round in my face,
And Want at length drove me to guilt and disgrace.
But all's for the best; . . on the world's wide sea cast,
I am haven'd in peace in this corner at last.

SAMUEL.

Come, 'Dick! we have 'done . . and for judgment
we call.

RICHARD.

And in faith I can give you no judgment at all:
But that as you're now settled, and safe from foul
weather,
You drink up your grog, and be merry together.

FREDERIC.

Time, *Night*. Scene, *The Woods*.

WHERE shall I turn me? whither shall I bend
My weary way? thus worn with toil and faint,
How through the thorny mazes of this wood
Attain my distant dwelling? That deep cry
That rings along the forest seems to sound
My parting knell: it is the midnight howl
Of hungry monsters prowling for their prey!
Again! O save me—save me, gracious Heaven!
I am not fit to die!
Thou coward wretch,
Why heaves thy trembling heart? why shake thy limbs
Beneath their palsied burden? Is there aught
So lovely in existence? wouldst thou drain
Even to its dregs the bitter draught of life?

Stamp'd with the brand of Vice and Infamy,
Why should the felon Frederic shrink from Death?

Death! Where the magic in that empty name
That chills my inmost heart? why at the thought
Starts the cold dew of fear on every limb?
There are no terrors to surround the Grave,
When the calm Mind collected in itself
Surveys that narrow house: the ghastly train
That haunt the midnight of delirious Guilt
Then vanish; in that home of endless rest
All sorrows cease!..Would I might slumber there!

Why then this panting of the fearful heart?
This miser love of life, that dreads to lose
Its cherish'd torment? Shall the man diseased
Yield up his members to the surgeon's knife,
Doubtful of succour, but to rid his frame
Of fleshly anguish; and the coward wretch,
Whose ulcerated soul can know no help,
Shrink from the best Physician's certain aid?

Oh, it were better far to lie me down
Here on this cold damp earth, till some wild beast,
Seize on his willing victim! If to die
Were all, 'twere sweet indeed to rest my head
On the cold clod, and sleep the sleep of Death.
But if the Archangel's trump at the last hour
Startle the ear of Death, and wake the soul
To phrensy?.. Dreams of infancy; fit tales
For garrulous beldames to affrighten babes!
What if I warr'd upon the world? the world
Had wrong'd me first: I had endur'd the ills
Of hard injustice; all this goodly earth
Was but to me one wide waste wilderness;
I had no share in nature's patrimony;
Blasted were all my morning hopes of youth,
Dark DISAPPOINTMENT followed on my ways,
CARE was my bosom inmate, and keen WANT
Gnawed at my heart. ETERNAL ONE, thou knowest
How that poor heart even in the bitter hour

Of lewdest revelry has inly yearn'd
For peace.
My FATHER! I will call on thee,
Pour to thy mercy-seat my earnest prayer,
And wait thy righteous will, resign'd of soul.
O thoughts of comfort! how the afflicted heart,
Tired with the tempest of its passions, rests
On you with holy hope! The hollow howl
Of yonder harmless tenant of the woods
Comes with no terror to the sober'd sense.
If I have sinn'd against mankind, on them
Be that past sin; they made me what I was.
In these extremest climes can Want no more
Urge to the deeds of darkness, and at length
Here shall I rest. What though my hut be poor—
The rains descend not through its humble roof:...
Would I were there again! The night is cold;
And what if in my wanderings I should rouse
The savage from his thicket!

Hark! the gun!
And lo, the fire of safety! I shall reach
My little hut again! again by toil
Force from the stubborn earth my sustenance,
And quick-ear'd guilt will never start alarm'd
Amid the well-earn'd meal. This felon's garb..
Will it not shield me from the winds of Heaven?
And what could purple more? O strengthen me,
Eternal One, in this serener state!
Cleanse thou mine heart, so PENITENCE and FAITH
Shall heal my soul, and my last days be peace.

1794.

Sonnets.

SONNET I.

Go, Valentine, and tell that lovely maid
Whom fancy still will portray to my sight,
How here I linger in this sullen shade,
This dreary gloom of dull monastic night.
Say, that from every joy of life remote
At evening's closing hour I quit the throng,
Listening in solitude the ring-dove's note,
Who pours like me her solitary song.
Say, that her absence calls the sorrowing sigh;
Say, that of all her charms I love to speak,
In fancy feel the magic of her eye,
In fancy view the smile illume her cheek,
Court the lone hour when silence stills the grove,
And heave the sigh of Memory and of Love.

1794.

SONNET II.

THINK, Valentine, as speeding on thy way
Homeward thou hastest light of heart along,
If heavily creep on one little day
The medley crew of travellers among,
Think on thine absent friend: reflect that here
On life's sad journey comfortless he roves,
Remote from every scene his heart holds dear,
From him he values, and from her he loves.
And when, disgusted with the vain and dull
Whom chance companions of thy way may doom,
Thy mind, of each domestic comfort full,
Turns to itself and meditates on home,
Ah think what cares must ache within his breast
Who loathes the road, yet sees no home of rest!

1794.

SONNET III.

NOT to thee, Bedford, mournful is the tale
Of days departed. Time in his career
Arraigns not thee that the neglected year
Hath past unheeded onward. To the vale
Of years thou journeyest; may the future road
Be pleasant as the past! and on my friend
Friendship and Love, best blessings! still attend,
Till full of days he reach the calm abode
Where Nature slumbers. Lovely is the age
Of Virtue: with such reverence we behold
The silver hairs, as some gray oak grown old
That whilom mock'd the rushing tempest's rage,
Now like the monument of strength decay'd,
With rarely-sprinkled leaves casting a trembling shade.

1794.

SONNET IV.

As thus I stand beside the murmuring stream
And watch its current, Memory here portrays
Scenes faintly form'd of half-forgotten days,
Like far-off woodlands by the moon's bright beam
Dimly descried, but lovely. I have worn
Amid these haunts the heavy hours away,
When Childhood idled through the Sabbath-day;
Risen to my tasks at winter's earliest morn;
And when the twilight slowly darken'd, here,
Thinking of home, and all of heart forlorn,
Have sigh'd and shed in silence many a tear.
Dream-like and indistinct those days appear,
As the faint sounds of this low brooklet borne
Upon the breeze, reach fitfully the ear.

1794.

SONNET V.

TO THE EVENING RAINBOW.

MILD arch of promise! on the evening sky
Thou shinest fair with many a lovely ray
Each in the other melting. Much mine eye
Delights to linger on thee; for the day,
Changeful and many-weather'd, seem'd to smile
Flashing brief splendour through the clouds awhile,
Which deepen'd dark anon and fell in rain:
But pleasant is it now to pause, and view
Thy various tints of frail and watery hue,
And think the storm shall not return again.
Such is the smile that Piety bestows
On the good man's pale cheek, when he, in peace
Departing gently from a world of woes,
Anticipates the realm where sorrows cease.

1794.

SONNET VI.

WITH many a weary step, at length I gain
Thy summit, Lansdown; and the cool breeze plays
Gratefully round my brow, as hence I gaze
Back on the fair expanse of yonder plain.
'Twas a long way and tedious! To the eye
Though fair the extended vale, and fair to view
The autumnal leaves of many a faded hue,
That eddy in the wild gust moaning by.
Even so it fared with life! in discontent
Restless through Fortune's mingled scenes I went ...
Yet wept to think they would return no more!
But cease, fond heart, in such sad thoughts to roam;
For surely thou ere long shalt reach thy home,
And pleasant is the way that lies before.

1794.

SONNET VII.

FAIR is the rising morn when o'er the sky
The orient sun expands his roseate ray,
And lovely to the bard's enthusiast eye
Fades the soft radiance of departing day;
But fairer is the smile of one we love,
Than all the scenes in Nature's ample sway,
And sweeter than the music of the grove,
The voice that bids us welcome. Such delight,
EDITH! is mine, escaping to thy sight
From the hard durance of the empty throng.
Too swiftly then towards the silent night,
Ye hours of happiness! ye speed along;
Whilst I, from all the World's cold cares apart,
Pour out the feelings of my burthen'd heart.

1794.

SONNET VIII.

How darkly o'er yon far-off mountain frowns
The gather'd tempest! from that lurid cloud
The deep-voiced thunders roll, awful and loud
Though distant; while upon the misty downs
Fast falls in shadowy streaks the pelting rain.
I never saw so terrible a storm!
Perhaps some way-worn traveller in vain
Wraps his torn raiment round his shivering form,
Cold even as Hope within him! I the while
Pause me in sadness, though the sun-beams smile
Cheerily round me. Ah that thus my lot
Might be with Peace and Solitude assigned,
Where I might from some little quiet cot
Sigh for the crimes and miseries of mankind!

1794.

SONNET IX.

O THOU sweet Lark, that in the heaven so high
Twinkling thy wings dost sing so joyfully,
I watch thee soaring with no mean delight,
And when at last I turn mine aching eye
That lags, how far below that lofty flight,
Still silently receive thy melody.
O thou sweet Lark, that I had wings like thee!
Not for the joy it were in yon blue light
Upward to plunge, and from my heavenly height
Gaze on the creeping multitude below,
But that I soon would wing my eager flight
To that loved home where Fancy even now
Hath fled, and Hope looks onward thro' a tear,
Counting the weary hours that keep her here.

1798.

52603

SONNET X.

THOU lingerest, Spring! still wintry is the scene,
The fields their dead and sapless russet wear;
Scarce does the glossy celandine appear
Starring the sunny bank, or early green
The elder yet its circling tufts put forth.
The sparrow tenants still the eaves-built nest
Where we should see our martin's snowy breast
Oft darting out. The blasts from the bleak north
And from the keener east still frequent blow.
Sweet Spring, thou lingerest! and it should be so,
Late let the fields and gardens blossom out!
Like man when most with smiles thy face is drest,
'Tis to deceive, and he who knows ye best,
When most ye promise, ever most must doubt.

1799.

SONNET XI.

BEWARE a speedy friend, the Arabian said,
And wisely was it he advised distrust:
The flower that blossoms earliest fades the first.
Look at yon Oak that lifts its stately head,
And dallies with the autumnal storm, whose rage
Tempests the ocean waves; slowly it rose,
Slowly its strength increased through many an age,
And timidly did its light leaves disclose,
As doubtful of the spring, their palest green.
They to the summer cautiously expand,
And by the warmer sun and season bland
Matured, their foliage in the grove is seen,
When the bare forest by the wintry blast
Is swept, still lingering on the boughs the last.

1798.

SONNET XII.

TO A GOOSE.

If thou didst feed on western plains of yore;
Or waddle wide with flat and flabby feet
Over some Cambrian mountain's plashy moor;
Or find in farmer's yard a safe retreat
From gipsy thieves, and foxes sly and fleet;
If thy grey quills, by lawyer guided, trace
Deeds big with ruin to some wretched race,
Or love-sick poet's sonnet, sad and sweet,
Wailing the rigour of his lady fair;
Or if, the drudge of housemaid's daily toil,
Cobwebs and dust thy pinions white besoil,
Departed goose! I neither know nor care.
But this I know, that thou wert very fine,
Season'd with sage, and onions, and port wine.

1797.

SONNET XIII.

I MARVEL not, O Sun! that unto thee
In adoration man should bow the knee,
And pour his prayers of mingled awe and love;
For like a God thou art, and on thy way
Of glory sheddest with benignant ray,
Beauty, and life, and joyance from above.
No longer let these mists thy radiance shroud,
These cold raw mists that chill the comfortless day;
But shed thy splendour through the opening cloud
And cheer the earth once more. The languid flowers
Lie odourless, bent down with heavy rain,
Earth asks thy presence, saturate with showers!
O Lord of Light! put forth thy beams again,
For damp and cheerless are the gloomy hours.

1798.

SONNET XIV.

FAIR be thy fortunes in the distant land,
Companion of my earlier years and friend!
Go to the Eastern world, and may the hand
Of Heaven its blessing on thy labour send.
And may I, if we ever more should meet,
See thee with affluence to thy native shore
Return'd;..I need not pray that I may greet
The same untainted goodness as before.
Long years must intervene before that day;
And what the changes Heaven to each may send,
It boots not now to bode: Oh early friend!
Assured, no distance e'er can wear away
Esteem long rooted, and no change remove
The dear remembrance of the friend we love.

1798.

SONNET XV.

FAREWELL my home, my home no longer now,
Witness of many a calm and happy day;
And thou fair eminence, upon whose brow
Dwells the last sunshine of the evening ray,
Farewell! Mine eyes no longer shall pursue
The western sun beyond the utmost height,
When slowly he forsakes the fields of light.
No more the freshness of the falling dew,
Cool and delightful, here shall bathe my head,
As from this western window dear, I lean,
Listening, the while I watch the placid scene,
The martins twittering underneath the shed.
Farewell, my home! where many a day has past
In joys whose loved remembrance long shall last.

1799.

SONNET XVI.

Porlock, thy verdant vale so fair to sight,
Thy lofty hills with fern and furze so brown,
The waters that so musical roll down
Thy woody glens, the traveller with delight
Recalls to memory, and the channel grey
Circling its surges in thy level bay; —
Porlock, I also shall forget thee not,
Here by the unwelcome summer rain confined;
And often shall hereafter call to mind
How here, a patient prisoner, 'twas my lot,
To wear the lonely, lingering close of day,
Making my Sonnet by the alehouse fire,
Whilst Idleness and Solitude inspire
Dull rhymes to pass the duller hours away.

August 9. 1799.

SONNET XVII.

STATELY yon vessel sails adown the tide,
To some far distant land adventurous bound;
The sailors' busy cries from side to side
Pealing among the echoing rocks resound:
A patient, thoughtless, much-enduring band,
Joyful they enter on their ocean way,
With shouts exulting leave their native land,
And know no care beyond the present day.
But is there no poor mourner left behind,
Who sorrows for a child or husband there?
Who at the howling of the midnight wind
Will wake and tremble in her boding prayer?
So may her voice be heard, and Heaven be kind!..
Go, gallant ship, and be thy fortune fair!

1799.

SONNET XVIII.

O God! have mercy in this dreadful hour
On the poor mariner! in comfort here
Safe shelter'd as I am, I almost fear
The blast that rages with resistless power.
What were it now to toss upon the waves,..
The madden'd waves, and know no succour near;
The howling of the storm alone to hear,
And the wild sea that to the tempest raves;
To gaze amid the horrors of the night
And only see the billow's gleaming light;
And in the dread of death to think of her
Who, as she listens sleepless to the gale,
Puts up a silent prayer and waxes pale?...
O God! have mercy on the mariner!

1799.

SONNET XIX.

SHE comes majestic with her swelling sails,
The gallant bark! along her watery way
Homeward she drives before the favouring gales;
Now flirting at their length the streamers play,
And now they ripple with the ruffling breeze.
Hark to the sailors' shouts! the rocks rebound,
Thundering in echoes to the joyful sound.
Long have they voyaged o'er the distant seas,
And what a heart-delight they feel at last,
So many toils, so many dangers past,
To view the port desired, he only knows
Who on the stormy deep for many a day
Hath tost, aweary of his ocean way,
And watch'd, all anxious, every wind that blows.

1799.

SONNET XX.

A WRINKLED, crabbed man they picture thee,
Old Winter, with a rugged beard as grey
As the long moss upon the apple-tree;
Blue lipt, an ice-drop at thy sharp blue nose;
Close muffled up, and on thy dreary way,
Plodding alone through sleet and drifting snows.
They should have drawn thee by the high-heapt hearth,
Old Winter! seated in thy great arm'd chair,
Watching the children at their Christmas mirth,
Or circled by them as thy lips declare
Some merry jest or tale of murder dire,
Or troubled spirit that disturbs the night,
Pausing at times to rouse the mouldering fire,
Or taste the old October brown and bright.

1799.

Monodramas.

SAPPHO.

Scene, *The Promontory of Leucadia.*

THIS is the spot:..'tis here Tradition says
That hopeless Love from this high towering rock
Leaps headlong to Oblivion or to Death.
Oh, 'tis a giddy height! my dizzy head
Swims at the precipice!..'tis death to fall!

Lie still, thou coward heart! this is no time
To shake with thy strong throbs the frame convulsed.
To die,—to be at rest,—oh, pleasant thought!
Perchance to leap and live; the soul all still,
And the wild tempest of the passions husht
In one deep calm; the heart, no more diseased
By the quick ague fits of hope and fear,
Quietly cold!

Presiding Powers, look down!
In vain to you I pour'd my earnest prayers,
In vain I sung your praises: chiefly thou,
VENUS! ungrateful Goddess, whom my lyre
Hymn'd with such full devotion! Lesbian groves,
Witness how often, at the languid hour
Of Summer twilight, to the melting song
Ye gave your choral echoes! Grecian maids,
Who hear with downcast look and flushing cheek,
That lay of love, bear witness! and ye youths,
Who hang enraptured on the impassion'd strain,
Gazing with eloquent eye, even till the heart
Sinks in the deep delirium! and ye, too,
Ages unborn! bear witness ye, how hard
Her fate who hymn'd the votive hymn in vain!
Ungrateful Goddess! I have hung my lute
In yonder holy pile: my hand no more
Shall wake the melodies that fail'd to move
The heart of Phaon!...yet when Rumour tells
How from Leucadia Sappho cast herself,

A self-devoted victim,..he may melt
Too late in pity, obstinate to love.

O haunt his midnight dreams, black NEMESIS!
Whom, *self-conceiving in the inmost depths
Of CHAOS, blackest NIGHT long labouring bore,
When the stern DESTINIES, her elder brood,
And shapeless DEATH, from that more monstrous birth
Leapt shuddering! haunt his slumbers, Nemesis!
Scorch with the fires of Phlegethon his heart,
Till helpless, hopeless, heaven-abandon'd wretch,
He too shall seek beneath the unfathom'd deep
To hide him from thy fury.

How the sea
Far distant glitters as the sun-beams smile,
And gaily wanton o'er its heaving breast!
Phœbus shines forth, nor wears one cloud to mourn
His votary's sorrows! God of Day shine on!..

* Ου τινι κοιμηθεισα θεα τεκε ΝΥΞ ερεβεννη.
ΗΣΙΟΔΟΣ.

By Men despised, forsaken by the Gods,
I supplicate no more.
How many a day,
O pleasant Lesbos! in thy secret streams
Delighted have I plunged, from the hot sun
Screen'd by the o'er-arching grove's delightful shade,
And pillow'd on the waters! Now the waves
Shall chill me to repose.
Tremendous height!
Scarce to the brink will these rebellious limbs
Support me. Hark! how the rude deep below
Roars round the rugged base, as if it called
Its long reluctant victim! I will come!..
One leap, and all is over! The deep rest
Of Death, or tranquil Apathy's dead calm,
Welcome alike to me. Away, vain fears!
Phaon is cold, and why should Sappho live?
Phaon is cold, or with some fairer one...
Thought worse than death!

She throws herself from the precipice.

1793.

XIMALPOCA.

Scene, *The Temple of Mexitli.*

SUBJECTS! friends! children! I may call you children,
For I have ever borne a father's love
Towards you; it is thirteen years since first
You saw me in the robes of royalty, . .
Since here the multitudes of Mexico
Hail'd me their King. I thank you, friends, that now,
In equal numbers and with equal love,
You come to grace my death.
For thirteen years
What I have been, ye know: that with all care,
That with all justness and all gentleness,
Seeking your weal, I govern'd. Is there one
Whom I have injured? one whose just redress

I have denied, or baffled by delay?
Let him come forth, that so no evil tongue
Speak shame of me hereafter. O my people,
Not by my sins have I drawn down upon me
The wrath of Heaven.

The wrath is heavy on me!
Heavy! a burthen more than I can bear!
I have endured contempt, insult, and wrongs,
From that Acolhuan tyrant! should I seek
Revenge? alas, my people, we are few, ..
Feeble our growing state! it hath not yet
Rooted itself to bear the hurricane;
It is the lion-cub that tempts not yet
The tyger's full-aged fury. Mexicans,
He sent to bid me wear a woman's robe; ..
When was the day that ever I look'd back
In battle? Mexicans, the wife I loved,
To faith and friendship trusted, in despite
Of me, of heaven, he seized, and spurn'd her back
Polluted! .. coward villain! and he lurks
Behind his armies and his multitudes,

And mocks my idle wrath!...It is not fit...
It is not possible that I should live!..
Live! and deserve to be the finger-mark
Of slave-contempt!...His blood I cannot reach,
But in my own all stains may be effaced;
It shall blot out the marks of infamy,
And when the warriors of the days to come
Tell of Ximalpoca, it shall be said
He died the brave man's death!
Not of the God
Unworthy, do I seek his altar thus,
A voluntary victim. And perchance
The sacrifice of life may profit ye,
My people, though all living efforts fail'd
By fortune, not by fault.
Cease your lament!
And if your ill-doom'd King deserved your love,
Say of him to your children, he was one
Who bravely bore misfortune; who, when life
Became dishonour, shook his body off,
And join'd the spirits of the heroes dead.

Yes! not in Miclanteuctli's dark abode
With cowards shall your King receive his doom:
Not in the icy caverns of the North
Suffer through endless ages! He shall join
The Spirits of the brave, with them at morn
Shall issue from the eastern gate of Heaven,
And follow through his fields of light the Sun;
With them shall raise the song and weave the dance;
Sport in the stream of splendour; company
Down to the western palace of his rest
The Prince of Glory; and with equal eye
Endure his center'd radiance. Not of you
Forgetful, O my people, even then;
But often in the amber cloud of noon
Diffused, will I o'erspread your summer fields,
And on the freshen'd maize and brightening meads
Shower plenty.
Spirits of my valiant Sires,
I come! Mexitli, never at thy shrine
Flow'd braver blood! never a nobler heart
Steam'd up to thee its life! Priest of the God,
Perform your office!

THE WIFE OF FERGUS.

Fergusius 3. *periit veneno ab uxore dato. Alii scribunt cum uxor sæpe exprobrasset ei matrimonii contemptum et pellicum greges, neque quicquam profecisset, tandem noctu dormientem ab ea strangulatum. Quæstione de morte ejus habitâ, cum amicorum plurimi insimularentur, nec quisquam ne in gravissimis quidem tormentis quicquam fater tur, mulier, alioqui ferox, tot innoxiorum capitum miserta, in medium processit ac e superiore loco cædem a se factam confessa, ne ad ludibrium superesset, pectus cultro transfodit: quod ejus factum varie pro cujusque ingenio est acceptum, ac perinde sermonibus celebratum.*

BUCHANAN.

Scene, *The Palace Court. The Queen speaking from the Battlements.*

CEASE..cease your torments! spare the sufferers!
Scotchmen, not theirs the deed;..the crime was mine,
Mine is the glory.

Idle threats! I stand
Secure. All access to these battlements
Is barr'd beyond your sudden strength to force;
And lo! the dagger by which Fergus died!
Shame on ye, Scotchmen, that a woman's hand
Was left to do this deed! Shame on ye, Thanes,
Who with slave-patience have so long endured
The wrongs, and insolence of tyranny!
Ye coward race!.. that not a husband's sword
Smote that adulterous King! that not a wife
Revenged her own pollution; in his blood
Wash'd her soul pure, and for the sin compell'd
Atoned by virtuous murder!.. O my God!
Of what beast matter hast thou moulded them
To bear with wrongs like these? There was a time
When if the Bard had feign'd you such a tale,
Your eyes had throbb'd with anger, and your hands
In honest instinct would have grasp't the sword.
O miserable men, who have disgraced
Your fathers, whom your sons must blush to name!

Aye, .. ye can threaten me! ye can be brave
In anger to a woman! one whose virtue
Upbraids your coward vice; whose name will live
Honour'd and praised in song, when not a hand
Shall root from your forgotten monuments
The cankering moss. Fools! fools! to think that death
Is not a thing familiar to my mind!
As if I knew not what must consummate
My glory! as if aught that earth can give
Could tempt me to endure the load of life!...
Scotchmen! ye saw when Fergus to the altar
Led me, his maiden Queen. Ye blest me then, ..
I heard you bless me, ..and I thought that Heaven
Had heard you also, and that I was blest,
For I loved Fergus. Bear me witness, God!
With what a sacred heart-sincerity
My lips pronounced the unrecallable vow
That made me his, him mine; bear witness, Thou!
Before whose throne I this day must appear
Stain'd with his blood and mine! my heart was his, ..

His in the strength of all its first affections.
In all obedience, in all love, I kept
Holy my marriage-vow. Behold me, Thanes!
Time hath not changed the face on which his eye
So often dwelt, when with assiduous care
He sought my love; with seeming truth, for one,
Sincere herself, impossible to doubt!
Time hath not changed that face;..I speak not now
With pride of beauties that will feed the worm
To-morrow! but with joyful pride I say,
That if the truest and most perfect love
Deserved requital, such was ever mine.
How often reeking from the adulterous bed
Have I received him! and with no complaint.
Neglect and insult, cruelty and scorn,
Long, long did I endure, and long curb down
The indignant nature.
Tell your countrymen,
Scotchmen, what I have spoken! say to them
Ye saw the Queen of Scotland lift the dagger

Red from her husband's heart; that in her own
She plunged it.

Stabs herself.

Tell them also, that she felt
No guilty fear in death.

LUCRETIA.

Scene, *The House of Collatine.*

WELCOME, my father! good Valerius,
Welcome! and thou too, Brutus! ye were both
My wedding guests, and fitly ye are come.
My husband..Collatine..alas! no more
Lucretia's husband, for thou shalt not clasp
Pollution to thy bosom,... hear me on!
For I must tell thee all.

I sat at eve
Spinning amid my maidens as I wont,
When from the camp at Ardea Sextus came.
Curb down thy swelling feelings, Collatine!
I little liked the man! yet, for he came
From Ardea, for he brought me news of thee,
I gladly gave him welcome; gladly listen'd,..
Thou canst not tell how gladly! to his tales

Of battles, and the long and perilous siege;
And when I laid me down at night to sleep,
'Twas with a lighten'd heart,.. I knew thee safe,
My visions were of thee.
Nay, hear me out!
And be thou wise in vengeance, so thy wife
Not vainly shall have suffer'd. I have wrought
My soul up to the business of this hour,
That it may stir your noble spirits, and prompt
Such glorious deeds that ages yet unborn
Shall bless my fate. At midnight I awoke,
The Tarquin was beside me! O my husband!
Where wert thou then! gone was my rebel strength,..
All power of utterance gone! astonish'd, stunn'd,
I saw the coward ruffian, heard him urge
His damned suit, and bid me tamely yield,..
Yield to dishonour. When he proffer'd death,..
Oh, I had leapt to meet the merciful sword!
But that with most accursed vows he vow'd,
That he would lay a dead slave by my side,
Murdering my spotless honour ... Collatine

From what an anguish have I rescued thee!
And thou, my father, wretched as thou art,
Thou miserable, childless, poor old man,...
Think, father, what that agony had been!
Now thou may'st sorrow for me, thou mays't bless
The memory of thy poor, polluted child.

Look if it have not kindled Brutus' eye!
Mysterious man! at last I know thee now,
I see thy dawning glories!..to the grave
Not unrevenged Lucretia shall descend;
Not always shall her wretched country wear
The Tarquin's yoke! ye will deliver Rome,
And I have comfort in this dreadful hour.

Think'st thou, my husband, that I dreaded death?
O Collatine! the weapon that had gored
My bosom had been ease, been happiness,..
Elysium, to the hell of his hot grasp.
Judge if Lucretia could have fear'd to die!

Stabs herself.

The
Amatory Poems
of
Abel Shufflebottom.

SONNET I.

DELIA AT PLAY.

SHE held a *Cup and Ball* of Ivory white,
Less white the Ivory than her *snowy* hand!
Enrapt I watch'd her from my secret stand,
As now, intent, in *innocent* delight,
Her *taper* fingers twirl'd the giddy ball,
Now tost it, following still with EAGLE *sight*,
Now on the pointed end *infix'd* its fall.
Marking her sport I mused, and musing sigh'd,
Methought the BALL she play'd with was my HEART!
(Alas! that Sport like *that* should be her pride!)
And the *keen point* which stedfast still she eyed
Wherewith to pierce it, that was CUPID'S *dart*;
Shall I not then the cruel Fair condemn
Who *on that dart* IMPALES *my* BOSOM'S GEM?

SONNET II.

TO A PAINTER ATTEMPTING DELIA'S PORTRAIT.

RASH Painter! canst thou give the ORB OF DAY
In all its noontide glory? or portray
The DIAMOND, that athwart the *taper'd* hall
Flings the rich flashes of its dazzling light?
Even if thine art could boast such *magic might*,
Yet if it strove to paint *my Angel's* EYE,
Here it perforce must fail. Cease! lest I call
Heaven's vengeance on thy sin: Must thou be told
The CRIME *it is to paint* DIVINITY?
Rash Painter! should the world her charms behold,
Dim and defiled, as there they needs must be,
They to their *old idolatry* would fall,
And bend before her form the *pagan* knee.
Fairer than VENUS, DAUGHTER OF THE SEA.

SONNET III.

HE PROVES THE EXISTENCE OF A SOUL FROM HIS LOVE FOR DELIA.

SOME have denied a soul! THEY NEVER LOVED,
Far from my Delia now by fate removed,
At home, abroad, I view her every where;
Her ONLY in the FLOOD OF NOON I see.
My *Goddess-Maid*, my OMNIPRESENT FAIR,
For Love annihilates the world to me!
And when the weary SOL *around his bed*
Closes the SABLE CURTAINS *of the night*,
SUN OF MY SLUMBERS, on my dazzled sight
SHE shines confest. When *every sound is dead*,
The SPIRIT OF HER VOICE comes then to *roll*
The *surge of music* o'er my wavy brain.
Far, far from her my *Body* drags its chain,
But sure with Delia *I exist* A SOUL!

SONNET IV.

THE POET EXPRESSES HIS FEELINGS RESPECTING A PORTRAIT IN DELIA'S PARLOUR.

I WOULD I were that Reverend Gentleman
With gold-laced hat and golden-headed cane,
Who hangs in Delia's parlour! For whene'er
From book or needlework her looks arise,
On him *converge the* SUN-BEAMS *of her eyes*,
And he *unblamed* may gaze upon MY FAIR,
And oft MY FAIR his *favour'd* form surveys.
O HAPPY PICTURE! still on HER to gaze!
I envy him! and jealous fear alarms,
Lest the STRONG *glance* of those *divinest* charms
WARM HIM TO LIFE, as in the ancient days,
When MARBLE MELTED in Pygmalion's arms.
I would I were that Reverend Gentleman
With gold-laced hat and golden-headed cane,

LOVE ELEGIES.

ELEGY I.

THE POET RELATES HOW HE OBTAINED DELIA'S POCKET-HANDKERCHIEF.

'Tis mine! what accents can my joy declare?
Blest be the pressure of the thronging rout!
Blest be the hand so hasty of my fair,
That left the *tempting corner* hanging out!

I envy not the joy the pilgrim feels,
After long travel to some distant shrine,
When at the relic of his saint he kneels;
For Delia's POCKET-HANDKERCHIEF IS MINE.

When first with *filching fingers* I drew near,
Keen hope shot tremulous through every vein,
And when the *finish'd deed* removed my fear,
Scarce could my bounding heart its joy contain.

What though the Eighth Commandment rose to mind,
It only serv'd a moment's qualm to move;
For thefts like this it could not be design'd,
The Eighth Commandment WAS NOT MADE FOR LOVE!

Here when she took the macaroons from me,
She wiped her mouth to clean the crumbs so sweet!
Dear napkin! yes, she wiped her lips in thee!
Lips *sweeter* than the *macaroons* she eat.

And when she took that pinch of Mocabaw,
That made my Love so *delicately* sneeze,
Thee to her Roman nose applied I saw,
And thou art doubly dear for things like these.

No washerwoman's filthy hand shall e'er,
SWEET POCKET-HANDKERCHIEF! thy worth profane;
For thou hast touch'd the *rubies* of my fair,
And I will kiss thee o'er and o'er again.

ELEGY II.

THE POET INVOKES THE SPIRITS OF THE ELEMENTS TO APPROACH DELIA. HE DESCRIBES HER SINGING.

YE SYLPHS, who *banquet* on my Delia's blush,
Who on her locks of FLOATING GOLD repose,
Dip in her cheek your GOSSAMERY BRUSH,
And with its bloom of beauty *tinge* THE ROSE.

Hover around her lips on *rainbow wing*,
Load from her honeyed breath your *viewless* feet,
Bear thence a richer fragrance for the Spring,
And make the lily and the violet sweet.

Ye GNOMES, whose toil through many a dateless year
Its nurture to the infant gem supplies,
From central caverns bring your diamonds here,
To *ripen in the* SUN OF DELIA'S EYES.

And ye who bathe in Etna's lava springs,
Spirits of fire! to see my love advance;
Fly, SALAMANDERS, on ASBESTOS' wings,
To wanton in my Delia's *fiery* glance.

She weeps, she weeps! her eye with anguish swells,
Some tale of sorrow melts my FEELING GIRL!
NYMPHS! catch the tears, and in your lucid shells
Enclose them, EMBRYOS OF THE ORIENT PEARL.

She sings! the Nightingale with envy hears,
The CHERUBIM bends from his starry throne,
And motionless are stopt the attentive SPHERES,
To hear *more heavenly music* than their own.

Cease, Delia, cease! for all the ANGEL THRONG,
Listening to thee, let sleep their golden wires!
Cease, Delia, cease! that *too surpassing* song,
Lest, *stung to envy*, they should break their lyres.

Cease, ere my senses are to madness driven
By the strong joy! cease, Delia, lest my soul
Enrapt, already THINK ITSELF IN HEAVEN,
And burst the feeble Body's frail controul.

ELEGY III.

THE POET EXPATIATES ON THE BEAUTY OF DELIA'S HAIR.

THE comb between whose ivory teeth she strains
The straitening curls of gold so *beamy bright*,
Not spotless merely from the touch remains,
But issues forth *more pure*, more *milky white*.

The rose-pomatum that the FRISEUR spreads
Sometimes with honour'd fingers for my fair,
No added perfume on her tresses sheds,
But borrows sweetness from her sweeter hair.

Happy the FRISEUR who in Delia's hair
With licensed fingers uncontroul'd may rove!
And happy in his death the DANCING BEAR,
Who died to make pomatum for my LOVE.

Oh could I hope that e'er my favour'd lays
Might *curl those lovely locks* with conscious pride,
Nor Hammond, nor the Mantuan Shepherd's praise
I'd envy then, nor wish reward beside.

Cupid has strung from you, O tresses fine,
The bow that in my breast impell'd his dart;
From you, sweet locks! he wove the subtile line
Wherewith the urchin *angled for* MY HEART.

Fine are my Delia's tresses as the threads
That from the silk-worm, *self-interr'd*, proceed;
Fine as the GLEAMY GOSSAMER that spreads
Its filmy web-work o'er the tangled mead.

Yet with these tresses Cupid's power elate
My captive *heart* has *handcuff'd* in a chain,
Strong as the cables of some huge first-rate,
THAT BEARS BRITANNIA'S THUNDERS O'ER THE MAIN.

The SYLPHS that round her radiant locks repair,
In *flowing lustre* bathe their brightening wings;
And ELFIN MINSTRELS with assiduous care
The ringlets rob for FAERY FIDDLE-STRINGS.

ELEGY IV.

THE POET RELATES HOW HE STOLE A LOCK OF DELIA'S HAIR, AND HER ANGER.

Oh! be the day accurst that gave me birth!
Ye Seas, to swallow me in kindness rise!
Fall on me, Mountains! and thou merciful Earth,
Open, and hide me from my Delia's eyes!

Let universal Chaos now return,
Now let the central fires their prison burst,
And EARTH and HEAVEN and AIR and OCEAN burn..
For Delia FROWNS..SHE FROWNS, *and I am curst!*

Oh! I could dare the fury of the fight,
Where hostile MILLIONS sought my single life;
Would storm VOLCANO BATTERIES with delight,
And grapple with GRIM DEATH in glorious strife.

Oh! I could brave the bolts of angry JOVE,
When ceaseless lightnings fire the midnight skies;
What is *his wrath* to that of HER I love?
What is his LIGHTNING to my DELIA'S EYES?

Go, fatal lock! I cast thee to the wind;
Ye *serpent* CURLS, ye *poison-tendrils*, go..
Would I could tear thy memory from my mind,
ACCURSED LOCK,.. thou cause of all my woe!

Seize the CURST CURLS, ye Furies, as they fly!
Demons of darkness, guard the infernal roll,
That thence your cruel vengeance when I die,
May *knit the* KNOTS OF TORTURE *for my* SOUL.

Last night,.. Oh hear me, Heaven, and grant my prayer!
The BOOK OF FATE before thy suppliant lay,
And let me from its ample records tear
Only the single PAGE OF YESTERDAY!

Or let me meet OLD TIME upon his flight,
And I will STOP HIM on his restless way;
Omnipotent in Love's resistless might,
I'll force him back the ROAD OF YESTERDAY.

Last night, as o'er the page of Love's despair,
My Delia bent *deliciously* to grieve,
I stood a *treacherous loiterer* by her chair,
And drew the FATAL SCISSARS from my sleeve:

And would that at that instant o'er my thread
The SHEARS OF ATROPOS had open'd then;
And when I reft the lock from Delia's head,
Had cut me sudden from the sons of men!

She heard the scissars that fair lock divide,
And whilst my heart with transport panted big,
She cast a fury frown on me, and cried,
"You stupid puppy,..you have spoil'd my wig!"

Lyric Poems.

TO CONTEMPLATION.

Καὶ παγὰς φιλέοιμι τὸν ἐγγύθεν ἦχον ἀκούειν
Ἃ τέρπει ψοφέοισα τὸν ἄγγικον, οὐχὶ ταράσσει.

ΜΟΣΧΟΣ.

FAINT gleams the evening radiance through the sky,
The sober twilight dimly darkens round;
In short quick circles the shrill bat flits by,
And the slow vapour curls along the ground.

Now the pleased eye from yon lone cottage sees
On the green mead the smoke long-shadowing play;
The Red-breast on the blossom'd spray
Warbles wild her latest lay,
And lo! the Rooks to yon high-tufted trees
Wing in long files vociferous, their way.
Calm CONTEMPLATION, 'tis thy favourite hour!
Come, tranquillizing Power!

I view thee on the calmy shore
When Ocean stills his waves to rest;
Or when slow-moving on the surges hoar
Meet with deep hollow roar
And whiten o'er his breast;
And when the Moon with softer radiance gleams,
And lovelier heave the billows in her beams.

When the low gales of evening moan along,
I love with thee to feel the calm cool breeze,
And roam the pathless forest wilds among,
Listening the mellow murmur of the trees
Full-foliaged, as they lift their arms on high,
And wave their shadowy heads in wildest melody.

Or lead me where amid the tranquil vale
The broken stream flows on in silver light;
And I will linger where the gale
O'er the bank of violets sighs,
Listening to hear its soften'd sounds arise;
And hearken the dull beetle's drowsy flight,

And watch the horn-eyed snail
Creep o'er his long moon-glittering trail,
And mark where radiant through the night
Shines in the grass-green hedge the glow-worm's
living light.

Thee, meekest Power! I love to meet,
As oft with solitary pace
The shatter'd Abbey's hallowed rounds I trace,
And listen to the echoings of my feet.
Or on some half-demolish'd tomb,
Whose warning texts anticipate my doom,
Mark the clear orb of night
Cast through the storying glass a faintly-varied light.

Nor will I not in some more gloomy hour
Invoke with fearless awe thine holier power,
Wandering beneath the sainted pile
When the blast moans along the darksome aisle,
And clattering patters all around
The midnight shower with dreary sound.

But sweeter 'tis to wander wild
By melancholy dreams beguiled,
While the summer moon's pale ray
Faintly guides me on my way
To some lone romantic glen
Far from all the haunts of men;
Where no noise of uproar rude
Breaks the calm of solitude;
But soothing Silence sleeps in all,
Save the neighbouring waterfall,
Whose hoarse waters falling near
Load with hollow sounds the ear,
And with down-dasht torrent white
Gleam hoary through the shades of night.
Thus wandering silent on and slow,
I'll nurse Reflection's sacred woe,
And muse upon the happier day
When Hope would weave her visions gay,
Ere FANCY, chill'd by adverse fate,
Left sad REALITY my mate.

O CONTEMPLATION! when to Memory's eyes
The visions of the long-past days arise,
Thy holy power imparts the best relief,
And the calm'd Spirit loves the joy of grief.

1792.

TO HORROR.

Τὶν γὰρ ποταείσομαι
τὰν καὶ σκύλικες τρομέοντι
Ἐρχομέναν νεκύων ἀνά τ' ἠριὰ, καὶ μέλαν αἷμα.
ΘΕΟΚΡΙΤΟΣ.

DARK Horror! hear my call!
Stern Genius, hear from thy retreat
On some old sepulchre's moss-canker'd seat,
Beneath the Abbey's ivied wall
That trembles o'er its shade;
Where wrapt in midnight gloom, alone,
Thou lovest to lie and hear
The roar of waters near,
And listen to the deep dull groan
Of some perturbed sprite
Borne fitful on the heavy gales of night.

Or whether o'er some wide waste hill
Thou mark'st the traveller stray,

Bewilder'd on his lonely way,
When, loud and keen and chill,
The evening winds of winter blow,
Drifting deep the dismal snow.

Or if thou followest now on Greenland's shore,
With all thy terrors, on the lonely way
Of some wreck'd mariner, where to the roar
Of herded bears, the floating ice-hills round
Pour their deep echoing sound,
And by the dim drear Boreal light
Givest half his dangers to the wretch's sight.

Or if thy fury form,
When o'er the midnight deep
The dark-wing'd tempests sweep,
Watches from some high cliff the increasing storm,
Listening with strange delight,
As the black billows to the thunder rave,
When by the lightning's light
Thou seest the tall ship sink beneath the wave.

Dark HORROR! bear me where the field of fight
Scatters contagion on the tainted gale,
When, to the Moon's faint beam,
On many a carcase shine the dews of night,
And a dead silence stills the vale,
Save when at times is heard the glutted Raven's scream.

Where some wreck'd army from the Conqueror's might
Speed their disastrous flight,
With thee, fierce Genius! let me trace their way,
And hear at times the deep heart-groan
Of some poor sufferer left to die alone,
His sore wounds smarting with the winds of night;
And we will pause, where, on the wild,
The mother to her frozen breast,
On the heap'd snows reclining, clasps her child,
And with him sleeps, chill'd to eternal rest!

Black HORROR! speed we to the bed of Death,
Where he whose murderous power afar

Blasts with the myriad plagues of war
Struggles with his last breath;
Then to his wildly-starting eyes
The phantoms of the murder'd rise;
Then on his phrensied ear
Their groans for vengeance and the Demon's yell
In one heart-maddening chorus swell;
Cold on his brow convulsing stands the dew,
And night eternal darkens on his view.

HORROR! I call thee yet once more!
Bear me to that accursed shore,
Where round the stake impaled the Negro writhes.
Assume thy sacred terrors then! dispense
The blasting gales of Pestilence!
Arouse the race of Afric, holy Power!
Lead them to vengeance! and in that dread hour
When ruin rages wide,
I will behold and smile by MERCY'S side.

1791.

TO A FRIEND.

Oh my faithful Friend!
Oh early chosen, ever found the same,
And trusted and beloved! once more the verse
Long destined, always obvious to thine ear,
Attend indulgent.

AKENSIDE.

AND wouldst thou seek the low abode
Where PEACE delights to dwell?
Pause, Traveller, on thy way of life!
With many a snare and peril rife
Is that long labyrinth of road!
Dark is the vale of years before;
Pause, Traveller, on thy way!
Nor dare the dangerous path explore
Till old EXPERIENCE comes to lend his leading ray.

Not he who comes with lanthorn light
Shall guide thy groping pace aright
With faltering feet and slow;
No! let him rear the torch on high,
And every maze shall meet thine eye,
And every snare and every foe;
Then with steady step and strong,
Traveller, shalt thou march along.

Though POWER invite thee to her hall,
Regard not thou her tempting call,
Her splendour's meteor glare;
Though courteous Flattery there await,
And Wealth adorn the dome of State,
There stalks the midnight spectre CARE:
PEACE, Traveller, doth not sojourn there.

If FAME allure thee, climb not thou
To that steep mountain's craggy brow
Where stands her stately pile;

For far from thence doth PEACE abide,
And thou shalt find FAME's favouring smile
Cold as the feeble Sun on Hecla's snow-clad side.

And, Traveller! as thou hopest to find
That low and loved abode,
Retire thee from the thronging road,
And shun the mob of human-kind.
Ah! hear how old EXPERIENCE schools,
" Fly, fly the crowd of Knaves and Fools,
" And thou shalt fly from woe!
" The one thy heedless heart will greet
" With Judas-smile, and thou wilt meet
" In every Fool a Foe!"

So safely mayst thou pass from these,
And reach secure the home of PEACE,
And FRIENDSHIP find thee there.
No happier state can mortal know,
No happier lot can Earth bestow,
If LOVE thy lot shall share.

Yet still CONTENT with him may dwell
Whom HYMEN will not bless,
And VIRTUE sojourn in the cell
Of HERMIT HAPPINESS.

1793.

REMEMBRANCE.

The remembrance of Youth is a sigh.

ALI.

MAN hath a weary pilgrimage
As through the world he wends,
On every stage from youth to age
Still discontent attends;
With heaviness he casts his eye
Upon the road before,
And still remembers with a sigh
The days that are no more.

To school the little exile goes,
Torn from his mother's arms,..
What then shall soothe his earliest woes,
When novelty hath lost its charms
Condemn'd to suffer through the day
Restraints which no rewards repay,
And cares where love has no concern,
Hope lengthens as she counts the hours
Before his wish'd return.
From hard controul and tyrant rules,
The unfeeling discipline of schools,
In thought he loves to roam,
And tears will struggle in his eye
While he remembers with a sigh
The comforts of his home.

Youth comes; the toils and cares of life
Torment the restless mind;
Where shall the tired and harass'd heart
Its consolation find?

Then is not Youth, as Fancy tells,
Life's summer prime of joy?
Ah no! for hopes too long delay'd,
And feelings blasted or betray'd,
The fabled bliss destroy;
And Youth remembers with a sigh
The careless days of Infancy.

Maturer Manhood now arrives,
And other thoughts come on,
But with the baseless hopes of Youth
Its generous warmth is gone;
Cold calculating cares succeed,
The timid thought, the wary deed,
The dull realities of Truth;
Back on the past he turns his eye,
Remembering with an envious sigh
The happy dreams of Youth.

So reaches he the latter stage
Of this our mortal pilgrimage,

With feeble step and slow;
New ills that latter stage await,
And old Experience learns too late
That all is vanity below.
Life's vain delusions are gone by,
Its idle hopes are o'er,
Yet age remembers with a sigh
The days that are no more.

1798.

THE SOLDIER'S WIFE.

DACTYLICS.

WEARY way-wanderer, languid and sick at heart,
Travelling painfully over the rugged road,
Wild-visaged Wanderer! ah for thy heavy chance!

Sorely thy little one drags by thee bare-footed,
Cold is the baby that hangs at thy bending back,
Meagre and livid and screaming its wretchedness.

* Woe-begone mother, half anger, half agony,
As over thy shoulder thou lookest to hush the babe,
Bleakly the blinding snow beats in thy hagged face.

Thy husband will never return from the war again,
Cold is thy hopeless heart even as Charity!..
Cold are thy famish'd babes.—God help thee, widowed One!

1795.

* This stanza was supplied by S. T. COLERIDGE.

THE WIDOW.

SAPPHICS.

Cold was the night wind, drifting fast the snow fell,
Wide were the downs and shelterless and naked,
When a poor Wanderer struggled on her journey,
Weary and way-sore.

Drear were the downs, more dreary her reflections;
Cold was the night-wind, colder was her bosom:
She had no home, the world was all before her,
She had no shelter.

Fast o'er the heath a chariot rattled by her,
"Pity me!" feebly cried the lonely wanderer.
"Pity me, strangers! lest with cold and hunger
"Here I should perish.

" Once I had friends,—but they have all forsook me!
" Once I had parents,—they are now in Heaven!
" I had a home once—I had once a husband—
" Pity me, strangers!

" I had a home once—I had once a husband—
" I am a widow poor and broken-hearted!"
Loud blew the wind, unheard was her complaining,
On drove the chariot.

Then on the snow she laid her down to rest her;
She heard a horseman, " Pity me!" she groaned out;
Loud was the wind, unheard was her complaining,
On went the horseman.

Worn out with anguish, toil and cold and hunger,
Down sunk the Wanderer, sleep had seized her senses;
There did the traveller find her in the morning;
God had released her.

1796.

THE CHAPEL BELL.

Lo I, the man who erst the Muse did ask
Her deepest notes to swell the Patriot's meeds,
Am now enforced, a far unfitter task,
For cap and gown to leave my minstrel weeds;
For yon dull tone that tinkles on the air
Bids me lay by the lyre and go to morning prayer.

Oh how I hate the sound! it is the knell
That still a requiem tolls to Comfort's hour;
And loth am I, at Superstition's bell,
To quit or Morpheus' or the Muse's bower:
Better to lie and doze, than gape amain,
Hearing still mumbled o'er the same eternal strain.

Thou tedious herald of more tedious prayers,
Say, hast thou ever summoned from his rest
One being wakening to religious cares?
Or roused one pious transport in the breast?
Or rather, do not all reluctant creep
To linger out the hour in listlessness or sleep?

I love the bell, that calls the poor to pray,
Chiming from village church its cheerful sound,
When the sun smiles on Labour's holy-day.
And all the rustic train are gather'd round,
Each deftly dizen'd in his Sunday's best,
And pleased to hail the day of piety and rest.

And when, dim shadowing o'er the face of day,
The mantling mists of even-tide rise slow,
As through the forest gloom I wend my way,
The minster curfew's sullen voice I know,
And pause, and love its solemn toll to hear,
As made by distance soft it dies upon the ear.

Nor with an idle nor unwilling ear
Do I receive the early passing-bell;
For, sick at heart with many a secret care
When I lie listening to the dead man's knell,
I think that in the grave all sorrows cease,
And would full fain recline my head and be at peace.

But thou, memorial of monastic gall!
What fancy sad or lightsome hast thou given?
Thy vision-scaring sounds alone recall
The prayer that trembles on a yawn to heaven!
And this Dean's gape, and that Dean's nasal tone,
And Roman rites retain'd, though Roman faith be flown.

1793.

TO HYMEN.

God of the torch, whose soul-illuming flame
Beams brightest radiance o'er the human heart,
Of many a woe the cure,
Of many a joy the source;

To thee I sing, if haply may the Muse
Pour forth the song unblamed from these dull haunts,
Where never beams thy torch
To cheer the sullen scene.

I pour the song to thee, though haply doom'd
Alone and unbeloved to waste my days,
Though doom'd perchance to die
Alone and unbewail'd.

Yet will the lark albeit in cage enthrall'd
Send out her voice to greet the morning sun,
As wide his cheerful beams
Light up the landscape round;

When high in heaven she hears the caroling,
The prisoner too begins her morning hymn,
And hails the beam of joy,
Of joy to her denied.

Friend to each better feeling of the soul,
I sing to thee, for many a joy is thine,
And many a Virtue comes
To join thy happy train.

Lured by the splendour of thy sacred torch,
The beacon-light of bliss, young Love draws near,
And leads his willing slaves
To wear thy flowery chain.

And chasten'd Friendship comes, whose mildest sway
Shall cheer the hour of age, where fainter burn
The fading flame of Love,
The fading flame of Life.

Parent of every bliss, the busy hand
Of Fancy oft will paint in brightest hues
How calm, how clear, thy torch
Illumes the wintry hour:

Will paint the wearied labourer at that hour,
When friendly darkness yields a pause to toil,
Returning blithely home
To each domestic joy;

Will paint the well-trimm'd fire, the frugal meal
Prepared with fond solicitude to please;
The ruddy children round
Climbing the father's knee.

And oft will Fancy rise above the lot
Of honest Poverty, and dream how man
Nor rich, nor poor, enjoys
His best and happiest state;

When toil no longer irksome and constrain'd
By hard necessity, but comes to please,
To vary the still hour
Of tranquil happiness.

Why, Fancy, wilt thou, o'er the lovely scene
Pouring thy vivid hues, why, sorceress sweet!
Soothe sad reality
With visionary bliss!

Turn thou thine eyes to where the hallowed light
Of Learning shines! ah rather lead thy son
Along her mystic paths
To drink the sacred spring.

Lead calmly on along the unvaried path
To solitary Age's drear abode;...
Is it not Happiness
That gives the sting to Death?

Well then is he whose unembitter'd years
Are waning on in lonely listlessness.
If Life hath little joy,
Death hath for him no sting.

1794.

WRITTEN ON THE FIRST OF DECEMBER, 1793.

THOUGH now no more the musing ear
Delights to listen to the breeze,
That lingers o'er the green-wood shade,
I love thee, Winter! well.

Sweet are the harmonies of Spring,
Sweet is the summer's evening gale,
And sweet the Autumnal winds that shake
The many-colour'd grove.

And pleasant to the sober'd soul
The silence of the wintry scene,
When Nature shrouds herself, entranced
In deep tranquillity.

Not undelightful now to roam
The wild heath sparkling on the sight;
Not undelightful now to pace
The forest's ample rounds,

And see the spangled branches shine,
And mark the moss of many a hue
That varies the old tree's brown bark,
Or o'er the gray stone spreads.

And mark the cluster'd berries bright
Amid the holly's gay green leaves;
The ivy round the leafless oak
That clasps its foliage close.

So VIRTUE diffident of strength
Clings to RELIGION's firmer aid,
And by RELIGION's aid upheld,
Endures calamity.

Nor void of beauties now the spring,
Whose waters hid from summer-sun
Have soothed the thirsty pilgrim's ear
With more than melody.

The green moss shines with icy glare;
The long grass bends its spear-like form:
And lovely is the silvery scene
When faint the sun-beams smile.

Reflection too may love the hour
When Nature, hid in Winter's grave,
No more expands the bursting bud,
Or bids the flowret bloom.

For Nature soon in Spring's best charms,
Shall rise revived from Winter's grave,
Expand the bursting bud again,
And bid the flower re-bloom.

WRITTEN ON THE FIRST OF JANUARY, 1794.

COME, melancholy Moralizer, come!
Gather with me the dark and wintry wreath;
With me engarland now
The SEPULCHRE OF TIME!

Come, Moralizer, to the funeral song!
I pour the dirge of the Departed Days;
For well the funeral song
Befits this solemn hour.

But hark! even now the merry bells ring round
With clamorous joy to welcome in this day,
This consecrated day,
To Mirth and Indolence.

Mortal! whilst Fortune with benignant hand,
Fills to the brim thy cup of happiness,
Whilst her uncloúded sun
Illumes thy summer day,

Canst thou rejoice, ... rejoice that Time flies fast?
That night shall shadow soon thy summer-sun?
That swift the stream of Years
Rolls to Eternity?

If thou hast wealth to gratify eàch wish,
If power be thine, remember what thou art!
Remember thou art Man,
And Death thine heritage!

Hast thou known Love! doth Beauty's better sun
Cheer thy fond heart with no capricious smile,
Her eye all eloquence,
All harmony her voice?

Oh state of happiness!... hark! how the gale
Moans deep and hollow o'er the leafless grove!
Winter is dark and cold;
Where now the charms of Spring!

Sayst thou that Fancy paints the future scene
In hues too sombrous? that the dark-stoled Maid
With stern and frowning front
Appals the shuddering soul?

And wouldst thou bid me court her fairy form,
When, as she sports her in some happier mood,
Her many-coloured robes
Float varying in the sun?

Ah! vainly does the Pilgrim, whose long road
Leads o'er the barren mountain's storm-vext height,
With anxious gaze survey
The quiet vale, far off.

Oh there are those who love the pensive song,
To whom all sounds of Mirth are dissonant!
They at this solemn hour
Will love to contemplate!

For hopeless Sorrow hails the lapse of Time,
Rejoicing when the fading orb of day
Is sunk again in night,
That one day more is gone.

And he who bears Affliction's heavy load
With patient piety, well pleased he knows
The World a pilgrimage,
The Grave the inn of rest.

Written on SUNDAY MORNING.

Go thou and seek the House of Prayer!
I to the Woodlands wend, and there
In lovely Nature see the God of Love.
The swelling organ's peal
Wakes not my soul to zeal,
Like the wild music of the wind-swept grove.
The gorgeous altar and the mystic vest
Rouse not such ardour in my breast,
As where the noon-tide beam
Flash'd from the broken stream,
Quick vibrates on the dazzled sight;
Or where the cloud-suspended rain
Sweeps in shadows o'er the plain;
Or when reclining on the cliff's huge height
I mark the billows burst in silver light.

Go thou and seek the House of Prayer
I to the woodlands shall repair,
Feed with all Nature's charms mine eyes,
And hear all Nature's melodies.
The primrose bank shall there dispense
Faint fragrance to the awaken'd sense;
The morning beams that life and joy impart,
Shall with their influence warm my heart,
And the full tear that down my cheek will steal,
Shall speak the prayer of praise I feel!

Go thou and seek the House of Prayer!
I to the Woodlands bend my way,
And meet RELIGION there!
She needs not haunt the high-arch'd dome to pray,
Where storied windows dim the doubtful day:
With LIBERTY she loves to rove,
Wide o'er the heathy hill or cowslipt dale;
Or seek the shelter of the embowering grove,
Or with the streamlet wind along the vale.

Sweet are these scenes to her; and when the Night
Pours in the north her silver streams of light,
She woos Reflection in the silent gloom,
And ponders on the world to come.

1795.

THE RACE OF BANQUO.

Fly, son of Banquo! Fleance, fly!
Leave thy guilty sire to die!
O'er the heath the stripling fled,
The wild storm howling round his head;
Fear mightier through the shades of night
Urged his feet, and wing'd his flight;
And still he heard his father's cry,
Fly, son of Banquo! Fleance, fly!

Fly, son of Banquo! Fleance, fly!
Leave thy guilty sire to die!
On every blast was heard the moan,
The anguish'd shriek, the death-fraught groan;
Loathly night-hags join the yell,
And see — the midnight rites of Hell!

Forms of magic! spare my life!
Shield me from the murderer's knife!
Before me dim in lurid light
Float the phantoms of the night —
Behind I hear my Father cry,
Fly, son of Banquo — Fleance, fly!

Parent of the sceptred race,
Boldly tread the circled space;
Boldly Fleance venture near —
Sire of monarchs — spurn at fear.

Sisters, with prophetic breath,
Pour we now the dirge of Death!

* * * * * *

1793.

TO RECOVERY.

RECOVERY, where art thou?
Daughter of Heaven, where shall we seek thy help?
Upon what hallow'd fountain hast thou laid,
O Nymph adored, thy spell?

By the grey ocean's verge,
Daughter of Heaven, we seek thee, but in vain;
We find no healing in the breeze that sweeps
The thymy mountain's brow.

Where are the happy hours,
The sunshine where that cheer'd the morn of life!
For HEALTH is fled, and with her fled the joys
Which made existence dear.

I saw the distant hills
Smile in the radiance of the orient beam,
And gazed delighted that anon our feet
Should visit scenes so fair.

I look'd abroad at noon,
The shadow and the storm were on the hills;
The crags which like a faery fabric shone
Darkness had overwhelm'd.

On you, ye coming years,
So fairly shone the April gleam of Hope;
So darkly o'er the distance, late so bright,
Now settle the black clouds.

Come thou and chase away
SORROW and PAIN, the persecuting Powers
Who make the melancholy day so long,
So long the restless night.

Shall we not find thee here,
RECOVERY, on the ocean's breezy strand?
Is there no healing in the gales that sweep
The thymy mountain's brow?

I look for thy approach,
O life-preserving Power! as one who strays
Alone in darkness o'er the pathless marsh
Watches the dawn of day.

July, 1799.

YOUTH AND AGE.

With cheerful step the traveller
Pursues his early way,
When first the dimly-dawning east
Reveals the rising day.

He bounds along his craggy road,
He hastens up the height,
And all he sees and all he hears,
Administer delight.

And if the mist, retiring slow,
Roll round its wavy white,
He thinks the morning vapours hide
Some beauty from his sight.

But when behind the western clouds
  Departs the fading day,
How wearily the traveller
  Pursues his evening way!

Sorely along the craggy road
  His painful footsteps creep,
And slow with many a feeble pause,
  He labours up the steep.

And if the mists of night close round,
  They fill his soul with fear;
He dreads some unseen precipice,
  Some hidden danger near.

So cheerfully does youth begin
  Life's pleasant morning stage;
Alas! the evening traveller feels
  The fears of wary age!

1798.

THE OAK OF OUR FATHERS.

ALAS for the Oak of our Fathers, that stood
In its beauty, the glory and pride of the wood!

It grew and it flourish'd for many an age,
And many a tempest wreak'd on it its rage;
But when its strong branches were bent with the blast,
It struck its roots deeper, and flourish'd more fast.

Its head tower'd on high, and its branches spread round,
For its roots were struck deep, and its heart was sound;
The bees o'er its honey-dew'd foliage play'd,
And the beasts of the forest fed under its shade.

The Oak of our Fathers to Freedom was dear,
Its leaves were her crown, and its wood was her spear,
Alas for the Oak of our Fathers, that stood
In its beauty, the glory and pride of the wood!

There crept up an ivy and clung round the trunk,
It struck in its mouth and the juices it drunk;
The branches grew sickly deprived of their food,
And the Oak was no longer the pride of the wood.

The foresters saw and they gather'd around,
The roots still were fast, and the heart still was sound;
They lopt off the boughs that so beautiful spread,
But the ivy they spared on its vitals that fed.

No longer the bees o'er its honey-dews play'd,
Nor the beasts of the forest fed under its shade;
Lopt and mangled the trunk in its ruin is seen,
A monument now what its beauty has been.

The Oak has received its incurable wound,
They have loosen'd the roots, though the heart may
be sound;
What the travellers at distance green-flourishing see,
Are the leaves of the ivy that poison'd the tree.

Alas for the Oak of our Fathers, that stood
In its beauty, the glory and pride of the wood!

1798.

THE BATTLE OF PULTOWA.

On Vorska's glittering waves
The morning sun-beams play;
Pultowa's walls are throng'd
With eager multitudes;
Athwart the dusty vale
They strain their aching eyes,
Where to the fight moves on
The Conqueror Charles, the iron-hearted Swede.

Him Famine hath not tamed,
The tamer of the brave;
Him Winter hath not quell'd;
When man by man his veteran troops sunk down,
Frozen to their endless sleep,
He held undaunted on;
Him Pain hath not subdued.

What though he mounts not now
The fiery steed of war,
Borne on a litter to the fight he goes.

Go, iron-hearted King!
Full of thy former fame.
Think how the humbled Dane
Crouch'd to thy victor sword;
Think how the wretched Pole
Resign'd his conquer'd crown;
Go, iron-hearted King!
Let Narva's glory swell thy haughty breast,..
The death-day of thy glory, Charles, hath dawn'd
Proud Swede, the Sun hath risen
That on thy shame shall set!

Now bend thine head from heaven,
Now Patkul be revenged!
For o'er that bloody Swede
Ruin hath raised his arm;
For ere the night descends,

His veteran host subdued,
His laurels blasted to revive no more,
He flies before the foe!

Long years of hope deceived
That conquered Swede must prove;
Patkul, thou art avenged!
Long years of idleness
That restless soul must bear;
Patkul, thou art avenged!
The Despot's savage anger took thy life,
Thy death has stabb'd his fame.

1798.

THE TRAVELLER'S RETURN.

Sweet to the morning traveller
The song amid the sky,
Where twinkling in the dewy light
The skylark soars on high.

And cheering to the traveller
The gales that round him play,
When faint and heavily he drags
Along his noon-tide way.

And when beneath the unclouded sun
Full wearily toils he,
The flowing water makes to him
A soothing melody.

And when the evening light decays,
  And all is calm around,
There is sweet music to his ear
  In the distant sheep-bell's sound.

But oh! of all delightful sounds
  Of evening or of morn
The sweetest is the voice of Love,
  That welcomes his return.

1798.

THE OLD MAN'S COMFORTS,

AND HOW HE GAINED THEM.

You are old, Father William, the young man cried,
The few locks which are left you are grey;
You are hale, Father William, a hearty old man,
Now tell me the reason I pray.

In the days of my youth, Father William replied,
I remember'd that youth would fly fast,
And abused not my health and my vigour at first,
That I never might need them at last.

You are old, Father William, the young man cried,
And pleasures with youth pass away,
And yet you lament not the days that are gone,
Now tell me the reason I pray.

In the days of my youth, Father William replied,
I remember'd that youth could not last;
I thought of the future whatever I did,
That I never might grieve for the past.

You are old, Father William, the young man cried,
And life must be hastening away;
You are cheerful, and love to converse upon death!
Now tell me the reason I pray.

I am cheerful, young man, Father William replied,
Let the cause thy attention engage;
In the days of my youth I remember'd my God!
And He hath not forgotten my age.

1799.

TRANSLATION

OF

A GREEK ODE ON ASTRONOMY,

WRITTEN BY

S. T. COLERIDGE,

FOR THE PRIZE AT CAMBRIDGE, 1793.

1.

HAIL, venerable NIGHT!
O first-created, hail!
Thou who art doom'd in thy dark breast to veil
The dying beam of light.
The eldest and the latest thou,
Hail, venerable NIGHT!
Around thine ebon brow,
Glittering plays with lightning rays
A wreath of flowers of fire.
The varying clouds with many a hue attire
Thy many-tinted veil.

Holy are the blue graces of thy zone!
But who is he whose tongue can tell
The dewy lustres which thine eyes adorn?
Lovely to some the blushes of the Morn;
To some the glory of the Day,
When, blazing with meridian ray,
The gorgeous Sun ascends his highest throne;
But I with solemn and severe delight
Still watch thy constant car, immortal NIGHT!

2.

For then to the celestial Palaces
Urania leads, Urania, she
The Goddess who alone
Stands by the blazing throne,
Effulgent with the light of Deity.
Whom Wisdom, the Creatrix, by her side
Placed on the heights of yonder sky,
And smiling with ambrosial love, unlock'd
The depths of Nature to her piercing eye.
Angelic myriads struck their harps around,
And with triumphant song

The host of Stars a beauteous throng,
Around the ever-living Mind
In Jubilee their mystic dance begun;
When at thy leaping forth, O Sun!
The Morning started in affright,
Astonish'd at thy birth, her Child of Light!

3.

Hail, O Urania, hail!
Queen of the Muses! Mistress of the Song!
For thou didst deign to leave the heavenly throng.
As earthward thou thy steps wert bending,
A ray went forth and harbinger'd thy way:
All Ether laugh'd with thy descending.
Thou hadst wreath'd thy hair with roses,
The flower that in the immortal bower
Its deathless bloom discloses.
Before thine awful mien, compelled to shrink,
Fled Ignorance abash'd with all her brood;
Dragons, and Hags of baleful breath,
Fierce Dreams, that wont to drink
The Sepulchre's black blood;

Or on the wings of storms
Riding in fury forms,
Shriek'd to the mariner the shriek of Death.

4.

I boast, O Goddess, to thy name
That I have raised the pile of fame!
Therefore to me be given
To roam the starry path of Heaven,
To charioteer with wings on high,
And to rein in the Tempests of the sky.

5.

Chariots of happy Gods! Fountains of Light!
Ye Angel-Temples bright!
May I unblamed your flamy thresholds tread?
I leave Earth's lowly scene;
I leave the Moon serene,
The lovely Queen of Night;
I leave the wide domains,
Beyond where Mars his fiercer light can fling,
And Jupiter's vast plains,

(The many belted King;)
Even to the solitude where Saturn reigns,
Like some stern tyrant to just exile driven;
Dim-seen the sullen power appears
In that cold solitude of Heaven,
And slow he drags along
The mighty circle of long-lingering years.

6.

Nor shalt thou escape my sight,
Who at the threshold of the sun-trod domes
Art trembling, .. youngest Daughter of the Night!
And you, ye fiery-tressed strangers! you,
Comets who wander wide,
Will I along your pathless way pursue,
Whence bending I may view
The Worlds whom elder Suns have vivified.

7.

For Hope with loveliest visions soothes my mind,
That even in Man, Life's winged power,

When comes again the natal hour,
Shall on heaven-wandering feet
In undecaying youth,
Spring to the blessed seat;
Where round the fields of Truth
The fiery Essences for ever feed;
And o'er the ambrosial mead,
The breezes of serenity
Silent and soothing glide for ever by.

8.

There, Priest of Nature! dost thou shine,
NEWTON! a King among the Kings divine.
Whether with harmony's mild force,
He guides along its course
The axle of some beauteous star on high;
Or gazing in the spring
Ebullient with creative energy,
Feels his pure breast with rapturous joy possest,
Inebriate in the holy ecstasy!

9.

I may not call thee mortal then, my soul!
Immortal longings lift thee to the skies:
Love of thy native home inflames thee now,
With pious madness wise.
Know then thyself! expand thy wings divine!
Soon mingled with thy fathers thou shalt shine
A star amid the starry throng,
A God the Gods among.

1801.

The Retrospect.

THE RETROSPECT.

As on I journey through the vale of years,
By hopes enliven'd, or depress'd by fears,
Allow me, Memory, in thy treasured store,
To view the days that will return no more.
And yes! before thine intellectual ray,
The clouds of mental darkness melt away!
As when, at earliest day's awakening dawn
The hovering mists obscure the dewy lawn,
O'er all the landscape spread their influence chill,
Hang o'er the vale, and wood, and hide the hill;
Anon, slow-rising, comes the orb of day,
Slow fade the shadowy mists and roll away,
The prospect opens on the traveller's sight,
And hills and vales and woods reflect the living light.

O thou, the mistress of my future days,
Accept thy minstrel's retrospective lays:
To whom the minstrel and the lyre belong,
Accept, my EDITH, Memory's pensive song.
Of long-past days I sing, ere yet I knew
Or thought and grief, or happiness and you;
Ere yet my infant heart had learnt to prove
The cares of life, the hopes and fears of love.

Corston, twelve years in various fortunes fled
Have past with restless progress o'er my head,
Since in thy vale beneath the master's rule
I dwelt an inmate of the village school.
Yet still will Memory's busy eye retrace
Each little vestige of the well-known place;
Each wonted haunt and scene of youthful joy,
Where merriment has cheer'd the careless boy;
Well-pleased will fancy still the spot survey
Where once he triumph'd in the childish play,
Without one care where every morn he rose,
Where every evening sunk to calm repose.

Large was the house, though fallen by varying fate
From its old grandeur and manorial state.
Lord of the manor, here the jovial Squire
Once call'd his tenants round the crackling fire;
Here while the glow of joy suffused his face,
He told his ancient exploits in the chace,
And, proud his rival sportsmen to surpass,
He lit again the pipe, and fill'd again the glass.

But now no more was heard at early morn
The echoing clangor of the huntsman's horn;
No more the eager hounds with deepening cry
Leapt round him as they knew their pastime nigh;
The Squire no more obey'd the morning call,
Nor favourite spaniels fill'd the sportsman's hall;
For he, the last descendant of his race,
Slept with his fathers; and forgot the chace.
There now in petty empire o'er the school
The mighty master held despotic rule;
Trembling in silence all his deeds we saw,
His look a mandate, and his word a law;

Severe his voice, severe and stern his mien,
And wonderous strict he was, and wonderous wise
I ween.

Even now through many a long, long year I trace
The hour when first with awe I view'd his face;
Even now recall my entrance at the dome, . .
'Twas the first day I ever left my home!
Years intervening have not worn away
The deep remembrance of that wretched day,
Nor taught me to forget my earliest fears,
A mother's fondness, and a mother's tears;
When close she prest me to her sorrowing heart,
As loth as even I myself to part;
And I, as I beheld her sorrows flow,
With painful effort hid my inward woe.

But time to youthful troubles brings relief,
And each new object weans the child from grief.
Like April showers the tears of youth descend,
Sudden they fall, and suddenly they end,

A fresher pleasure cheers the following hour
As brighter shines the sun after the April shower.

Methinks even now the interview I see,
The Mistress's glad smile, the Master's glee;
Much of my future happiness they said,
Much of the easy life the scholars led,
Of spacious play-ground and of wholesome air,
The best instruction and the tenderest care;
And when I followed to the garden-door
My father, till through tears I saw no more,
How civilly they soothed my parting pain,
And how they never spake so civilly again.

Why loves the soul on earlier years to dwell,
When memory spreads around her saddening spell,
When discontent, with sullen gloom o'ercast,
Turns from the present and prefers the past?
Why calls reflection to my pensive view
Each trifling act of infancy anew,

Each trifling act with pleasure pondering o'er,
Even at the time when trifles please no more?
Yet is remembrance sweet, though well I know
The days of childhood are but days of woe;
Some rude restraint, some petty tyrant sours
The tranquil calm of childhood's easy hours;
Yet is it sweet to call those hours to mind,..
Those easy hours for ever left behind;
Ere care began the spirit to oppress,
When ignorance itself was happiness.

Such was my state in those remember'd years
When one small acre bounded all my fears;
And therefore still with pleasure I recall
The tapestried school, the bright-brown boarded hall,
The murmuring brook, that every morning saw
The due observance of the cleanly law,
The walnuts, where, when favour would allow,
Full oft I wont to search each well-stript bough;

The crab-tree, whence we hid the secret hoard
With roasted crabs to deck the wintry board,
These trifling objects then my heart possest,
These trifling objects still remain imprest;
So when with unskill'd hand the idle hind
Carves his rude name within the sapling's rind,
In after years the peasant lives to see
The expanding letters grow as grows the tree;
Though every winter's desolating sway
Shake the hoarse grove and sweep the leaves away,
That rude inscription uneffaced will last,
Unalter'd by the storm or wintry blast.

Oh while well pleased the letter'd traveller roams
Among old temples, palaces, and domes,
Strays with the Arab o'er the wreck of time
Where erst Palmyra's towers arose sublime,
Or marks the lazy Turk's lethargic pride
And Grecian slavery on Ilyssus' side,

Oh be it mine aloof from public strife
To mark the changes of domestic life,
The alter'd scenes where once I bore a part,
Where every change of fortune strikes the heart.
As when the merry bells with echoing sound
Proclaim the news of victory around,
Rejoicing patriots run the news to spread
Of glorious conquest and of thousands dead,
All join the loud huzza with eager breath,
And triumph in the tale of blood and death;
But if extended on the battle-plain,
Cut off in conquest some dear friend be slain,
Affection then will fill the sorrowing eye,
And suffering Nature grieve that one should die.

Cold was the morn, and bleak the wintry blast
Blew o'er the meadow, when I saw thee last.
My bosom bounded as I wander'd round
With silent step the long-remember'd ground,
Where I had loiter'd out so many an hour,
Chased the gay butterfly, and cull'd the flower,

Sought the swift arrow's erring course to trace,
Or with mine equals vied amid the chace.
I saw the church where I had slept away
The tedious service of the summer day;
Or, listening sad to all the preacher told,
In winter waked and shiver'd with the cold.
Oft have my footsteps roam'd the sacred ground
Where heroes, kings, and poets sleep around,
Oft traced the mouldering castle's ivied wall,
Or aged convent tottering to its fall,
Yet never had my bosom felt such pain,
As, Corston, when I saw thy scenes again;
For many a long-lost pleasure came to view,
For many a long-past sorrow rose anew;
Where whilom all were friends I stood alone,
Unknowing all I saw, of all I saw unknown.

There, where my little hands were wont to rear
With pride the earliest sallad of the year;
Where never idle weed to spring was seen,
Rank thorns and nettles rear'd their heads obscene:

Still all around and sad, I saw no more
The playful group, nor heard the playful roar;
There echoed round no shout of mirth and glee,
It seem'd as though the world were changed like
me!
Enough! it boots not on the past to dwell,.
Fair scene of other years, a long farewell!
Rouse up, my soul! it boots not to repine,
Rouse up! for worthier feelings should be thine;
Thy path is plain and straight,..that light is
given,..
Onward in faith....and leave the rest to Heaven.

1794.

Musings.

THE PAUPER'S FUNERAL.

WHAT! and not one to heave the pious sigh!
Not one whose sorrow-swoln and aching eye,
For social scenes, for life's endearments fled,
Shall drop a tear and dwell upon the dead!
Poor wretched Outcast! I will weep for thee,
And sorrow for forlorn humanity.
Yes, I will weep; but not that thou art come
To the stern sabbath of the silent tomb:
For squalid Want, and the black scorpion Care,
Heart-withering fiends! shall never enter there.
I sorrow for the ills thy life has known,
As through the world's long pilgrimage, alone,
Haunted by Poverty and woe-begone,
Unloved, unfriended, thou didst journey on:
Thy youth in ignorance and labour past,
And thine old age all barrenness and blast!

Hard was thy Fate, which, while it doom'd to woe
Denied thee wisdom to support the blow;
And robb'd of all its energy thy mind,
Ere yet it cast thee on thy fellow-kind,
Abject of thought, the victim of distress,
To wander in the world's wide wilderness.

Poor Outcast, sleep in peace! the wintry storm
Blows bleak no more on thine unshelter'd form;
Thy woes are past; thou restest in the tomb;—
I pause—and ponder on the days to come.

1795.

ON MY OWN

MINIATURE PICTURE,

Taken at Two Years of Age.

And I was once like this! that glowing cheek
Was mine, those pleasure-sparkling eyes; that brow
Smooth as the level lake, when not a breeze
Dies o'er the sleeping surface! — Twenty years
Have wrought strange alteration! Of the friends
Who once so dearly prized this miniature,
And loved it for its likeness, some are gone
To their last home; and some, estranged in heart,
Beholding me, with quick-averted glance
Pass on the other side! But still these hues
Remain unalter'd, and these features wear
The look of Infancy and Innocence.
I search myself in vain, and find no trace
Of what I was: those lightly arching lines
Dark and o'erhanging now; and that sweet face

Settled in these strong lineaments!—There were
Who formed high hopes and flattering ones of thee,
Young Robert! for thine eye was quick to speak
Each opening feeling: should they not have known,
If the rich rainbow on the morning cloud
Reflects its radiant dyes, the husbandman
Beholds the ominous glory, and foresees
Impending storms!—They augur'd happily,
That thou didst love each wild and wond'rous tale
Of faery fiction, and thine infant tongue
Lisp'd with delight the godlike deeds of Greece
And rising Rome; therefore they deem'd, forsooth,
That thou shouldst tread PREFERMENT'S pleasant path.
Ill-judging ones! they let thy little feet
Stray in the pleasant paths of POESY,
And when thou shouldst have prest amid the crowd,
There didst thou love to linger out the day,
Loitering beneath the laurel's barren shade.
SPIRIT OF SPENSER! was the wanderer wrong?

1796.

ON THE DEATH OF A FAVOURITE OLD SPANIEL.

AND they have drown'd thee then at last! poor Phillis!
The burden of old age was heavy on thee,
And yet thou should'st have lived! What though thine eye
Was dim, and watch'd no more with eager joy
The wonted call that on thy dull sense sunk
With fruitless repetition, the warm Sun
Might still have cheer'd thy slumber: thou didst love
To lick the hand that fed thee, and though past
Youth's active season, even Life itself
Was comfort. Poor old friend! how earnestly
Would I have pleaded for thee! thou hadst been
Still the companion of my childish sports;
And as I roam'd o'er Avon's woody cliffs,
From many a day-dream has thy short quick bark
Recall'd my wandering soul. I have beguiled
Often the melancholy hours at school,
Sour'd by some little tyrant, with the thought

Of distant home, and I remember'd then
Thy faithful fondness: for not mean the joy,
Returning at the pleasant holidays,
I felt from thy dumb welcome. Pensively
Sometimes have I remark'd thy slow decay,
Feeling myself changed too, and musing much
On many a sad vicissitude of Life!
Ah, poor companion! when thou followedst last
Thy master's parting footsteps to the gate
Which closed for ever on him, thou didst lose
Thy truest friend, and none was left to plead
For the old age of brute fidelity!
But fare thee well! Mine is no narrow creed;
And HE who gave thee being did not frame
The mystery of life to be the sport
Of merciless Man! There is another world
For all that live and move — a better one!
Where the proud bipeds, who would fain confine
INFINITE GOODNESS to the little bounds
Of their own charity, may envy thee.

1796.

ON A LANDSCAPE OF GASPAR POUSSIN.

Poussin! how pleasantly thy pictured scenes
Beguile the lonely hour! I sit and gaze
With lingering eye, till charmed Fancy makes
The lovely landscape live, and the rapt soul
From the foul haunts of herded human-kind
Flies far away with spirit speed, and tastes
The untainted air, that with the lively hue
Of health and happiness illumes the cheek
Of mountain Liberty. My willing soul
All eager follows on thy faery flights,
Fancy! best friend; whose blessed witcheries
With loveliest prospects cheat the traveller
O'er the long wearying desert of the world.
Nor dost thou, Fancy! with such magic mock
My heart, as, demon born, old Merlin knew,
Or Alquif, or Zarzafiel's sister sage,

Whose vengeful anguish for so many a year
Held in the jacinth sepulchre entranced
Lisuart the Grecian, pride of chivalry.
Friend of my lonely hours! thou leadest me
To such calm joys as Nature, wise and good,
Proffers in vain to all her wretched sons;
Her wretched sons who pine with want amid
The abundant earth, and blindly bow them down
Before the Moloch shrines of WEALTH and POWER,
AUTHORS of EVIL. Oh, it is most sweet
To medicine with thy wiles the wearied heart,
Sick of reality. The little pile
That tops the summit of that craggy hill
Shall be my dwelling: craggy is the hill
And steep; yet through yon hazels upward leads
The easy path, along whose winding way
Now close embower'd I hear the unseen stream
Dash down, anon behold its sparkling foam
Gleam through the thicket; and ascending on
Now pause me to survey the goodly vale

That opens on my vision. Half way up
Pleasant it were upon some broad smooth rock
To sit and sun myself, and look below,
And watch the goatherd down yon high-bank'd path
Urging his flock grotesque; and bidding now
His lean rough dog from some near cliff go drive
The straggler; while his barkings loud and quick
Amid their trembling bleat arising oft,
Fainter and fainter from the hollow road
Send their far echoes, till the waterfall,
Hoarse bursting from the cavern'd cliff beneath,
Their dying murmurs drown. A little yet
Onward, and I have gain'd the upmost height.
Fair spreads the vale below: I see the stream
Stream radiant on beneath the noontide sky.
A passing cloud darkens the bordering steep,
Where the town-spires behind the castle towers
Rise graceful; brown the mountain in its shade,
Whose circling grandeur, part by mists conceal'd,
Part with white rocks resplendent in the sun

Should bound mine eyes, — aye, and my wishes too,
For I would have no hope or fear beyond.
The empty turmoil of the worthless world,
Its vanities and vices, would not vex
My quiet heart. The traveller, who beheld
The low tower of the little pile, might deem
It were the house of God; nor would he err
So deeming, for that home would be the home
Of PEACE and LOVE, and they would hallow it
To HIM. Oh, life of blessedness! to reap
The fruit of honourable toil, and bound
Our wishes with our wants! Delightful thoughts,
That soothe the solitude of maniac HOPE,
Ye leave her to reality awaked,
Like the poor captive, from some fleeting dream
Of friends and liberty and home restored,
Startled, and listening as the midnight storm
Beats hard and heavy through his dungeon bars.

1796.

AUTUMN.

NAY, William, nay, not so! the changeful year
In all its due successions to my sight
Presents but varied beauties, transient all,
All in their season good. These fading leaves,
That with their rich variety of hues
Make yonder forest in the slanting sun
So beautiful, in you awake the thought
Of winter,..cold, drear winter, when these trees
Each like a fleshless skeleton thall stretch
Its bare brown boughs; when not a flower shall spread
Its colours to the day, and not a bird
Carol its joyaunce,..but all nature wear
One sullen aspect, bleak and desolate,
To eye, ear, feeling, comfortless alike.

To me their many-colour'd beauties speak
Of times of merriment and festival,
The year's best holiday: I call to mind
The school-boy days, when in the falling leaves
I saw with eager hope the pleasant sign
Of coming Christmas; when at morn I took
My wooden kalendar, and counting up
Once more its often-told account, smooth'd off
Each day with more delight the daily notch.
To you the beauties of the autumnal year
Make mournful emblems, and you think of man
Doom'd to the grave's long winter, spirit-broken,
Bending beneath the burthen of his years,
Sense-dull'd and fretful, "full of aches and pains,"
Yet clinging still to life. To me they shew
The calm decay of nature when the mind
Retains its strength, and in the languid eye
Religion's holy hopes kindle a joy
That makes old age look lovely. All to you
Is dark and cheerless; you in this fair world

See some destroying principle abroad,
Air, earth, and water full of living things,
Each on the other preying; and the ways
Of man, a strange perplexing labyrinth,
Where crimes and miseries, each producing each,
Render life loathsome, and destroy the hope
That should in death bring comfort. Oh, my friend,
That thy faith were as mine! that thou couldst see
Death still producing life, and evil still
Working its own destruction; couldst behold
The strifes and troubles of this troubled world
With the strong eye that sees the promised day
Dawn through this night of tempest! All things then
Would minister to joy; then should thine heart
Be heal'd and harmonized, and thou wouldst feel
God, always, every where, and all in all.

1798.

THE VICTORY.

HARK, .. how the church-bells' thundering harmony
Stuns the glad ear! tidings of joy have come,
Good tidings of great joy! two gallant ships
Met on the element, .. they met, they fought
A desperate fight! .. good tidings of great joy!
Old England triumph'd! yet another day
Of glory for the ruler of the waves!
For those who fell, 'twas in their country's cause,
They have their passing paragraphs of praise,
And are forgotten.
There was one who died
In that day's glory, whose obscurer name
No proud historian's page will chronicle.
Peace to his honest soul! I read his name,
'Twas in the list of slaughter, and blest God

The sound was not familiar to mine ear.
But it was told me after that this man
Was one whom lawful violence * had forced
From his own home and wife and little ones,
Who by his labour lived; that he was one
Whose uncorrupted heart could keenly feel
A husband's love, a father's anxiousness;
That from the wages of his toil he fed
The distant dear ones, and would talk of them
At midnight when he trod the silent deck
With him he valued,.. talk of them, of joys
Which he had known.. oh God! and of the hour
When they should meet again, till his full heart,
His manly heart, at last would overflow,
Even like a child's, with very tenderness..
Peace to his honest spirit! suddenly
It came, and merciful the ball of death,

---

* The person alluded to was pressed into the service.

For it came suddenly and shatter'd him,
And left no moment's agonizing thought
On those he loved so well.
He ocean-deep
Now lies at rest. Be Thou her comforter
Who art the widow's friend! Man does not know
What a cold sickness made her blood run back
When first she heard the tidings of the fight;
Man does not know with what a dreadful hope
She listened to the names of those who died;
Man does not know, or knowing will not heed,
With what an agony of tenderness
She gazed upon her children, and beheld
His image who was gone. O God! be Thou,
Who art the widow's friend, her comforter!

1798.

HISTORY.

THOU chronicle of crimes! I read no more;
For I am one who willingly would love
His fellow-kind. O gentle Poesy,
Receive me from the court's polluted scenes,
From dungeon horrors, from the fields of war,
Receive me to your haunts, . . that I may nurse
My nature's better feelings, for my soul
Sickens at man's misdeeds!
I spake, when lo!
There stood before me, in her majesty,
Clio, the strong-eyed Muse. Upon her brow
Sate a calm anger. Go, young man, she cried,
Sigh among myrtle bowers, and let thy soul
Effuse itself in strains so sorrowful sweet,
That love-sick Maids may weep upon thy page,

Pleased with delicious sorrow. Oh shame! shame!
Was it for this I waken'd thy young mind?
Was it for this I made thy swelling heart
Throb at the deeds of Greece, and thy boy's eye
So kindle when that glorious Spartan died?
Boy! boy! deceive me not!... What if the tale
Of murder'd millions strike a chilling pang;
What if Tiberius in his island stews,
And Philip at his beads, alike inspire
Strong anger and contempt; hast thou not risen
With nobler feelings,.. with a deeper love
For Freedom? Yes, if righteously thy soul
Loathes the black history of human crimes
And human misery, let that spirit fill
Thy song, and it shall teach thee, boy! to raise
Strains such as Cato might have deign'd to hear,
As Sidney in his hall of bliss may love.

1798.

THE SOLDIER'S FUNERAL.

It is the funeral march. I did not think
That there had been such magic in sweet sounds!
Hark! from the blacken'd cymbal that dead tone!.
It awes the very rabble multitude;
They follow silently, their earnest brows
Lifted in solemn thought. 'Tis not the pomp
And pageantry of death that with such force
Arrests the sense;..the mute and mourning train,
The white plume nodding o'er the sable hearse,
Had past unheeded, or perchance awoke
A serious smile upon the poor man's cheek
At pride's last triumph. Now these measured sounds,
This universal language, to the heart
Speak instant, and on all these various minds
Compel one feeling.

But such better thoughts
Will pass away, how soon! and these who here
Are following their dead comrade to the grave,
Ere the night fall will in their revelry
Quench all remembrance. From the ties of life
Unnaturally rent, a man who knew
No resting place, no dear delights of home,
Belike who never saw his children's face,
Whose children knew no father; he is gone,..
Dropt from existence, like a blasted leaf
That from the summer tree is swept away,
Its loss unseen. She hears not of his death
Who bore him, and already for her son
Her tears of bitterness are shed: when first
He had put on the livery of blood,
She wept him dead to her.
We are indeed
Clay in the potter's hand! one favour'd mind,
Scarce lower than the Angels, shall explore
The ways of Nature, whilst his fellow-man,

Framed with like miracle, the work of God,
Must as the unreasonable beast drag on
A life of labour; like this soldier here,
His wonderous faculties bestow'd in vain,
Be moulded by his fate till he becomes
A mere machine of murder.

And there are
Who say that this is well! as God has made
All things for man's good pleasure, so of men
The many for the few! Court-moralists,
Reverend lip-comforters, that once a-week
Proclaim how blessed are the poor, for they
Shall have their wealth hereafter, and though now
Toiling and troubled, though they pick the crumbs
That from the rich man's table fall, at length
In Abraham's bosom rest with Lazarus.
Themselves meantime secure their good things here,
And feast with Dives. These are they, O Lord!
Who in thy plain and simple Gospel see
All mysteries, but who find no peace enjoin'd,

No brotherhood, no wrath denounced on them
Who shed their brethren's blood, .. blind at noon-day
As owls, lynx-eyed in darkness!

O my God!

I thank thee, with no Pharisaic pride
I thank thee, that I am not such as these;
I thank thee for the eye that sees, the heart
That feels, the voice that in these evil days,
Amid these evil tongues, exalts itself,
And cries aloud against iniquity.

1795.

END OF VOLUME FIRST.

LONDON:
Printed by A. & R. Spottiswoode,
New-Street-Square.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 23 January, 2019